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A Study of Food Patterns and Meal Consumption

Better Homes and Gardens®

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Table of Contents

Page

Introduction 1

Special Notes 1

Survey Highlights 2

Detailed Findings

- Food Preparation Responsibility and Frequency 2
- Alterations in Cooking Patterns and Cooking Equipment 6
- Cooking Methods 8
- Meal Consumption Habits 11

Methodology 13

- Demographic Profile of Respondents 14
- Projectability 15
- Sampling Variation 16

Introduction

Pinpointing trends in food preparation or usage and supermarket shopping habits is critical for the Food Marketing Institute and Better Homes and Gardens® magazine in staying on target with the needs of America's consumers. With a goal of tracking these trends over five years, in 1987 the Food Marketing Institute and Better Homes and Gardens commissioned a study covering these areas:

- Food patterns and meal consumption.
- Time and convenience.
- Nutrition.
- Information sources, planning and purchasing.

This summary on food patterns and meal consumption contains the results of the survey among "involved" food preparers and households except when referring to Table 1. Only "involved" food preparers and households are documented, because they represent the vast majority of reporting households (757 from a total of 862) and because the most interesting information come from these.

The definition of involvement follows:

- **Involved Food Preparers:** Those male and female heads of household who reported preparing an evening meal in the household at least once a month or preparing part of an evening meal — a main dish, side dish, or dessert — at least once a week.
- **Involved Households:** Those households in which the interviewed head of household reported preparing an evening meal in the household at least once a month or part of an evening meal — a main dish, side dish, or dessert — at least once a week.

Additional summaries from this study covering 1) time and convenience, 2) nutrition and 3) information sources, planning and purchasing are available. Supermarket personnel may obtain these from the Food Marketing Institute and manufacturers from Better Homes and Gardens magazine.

Special Notes

All charts except Chart 1 are based on the 757 "involved" food preparers/households or a subsample noted after the specific question. Chart 1 represents the results of the screening question that determined which households were "involved" and which were "uninvolved." "Involved" food preparers and "involved" households are used interchangeably. The percentages shown in each table are calculated on the base number noted. These percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple response.

In the text, when percentages are noted for a respondent, it is assumed that the survey participant is speaking for his or her household only. Percentages with the percent sign running down are to be read across; those with the percent sign running across are to be read down.

For more specific information on the study and sampling tolerances, the methodology is found at the end of this summary.

While care has been taken to summarize study results completely, specific charts and applicable demographic groups have been selected to show the important points in the study.

Highlights on Food Patterns and Meal Consumption*

Women remain the primary food preparers, but male participation is substantial and growing.

While 96% of females say they're the main cooks, 47% of male respondents also claim that role. In addition, 35% of the men polled say they're cooking more often than five years ago.

The presence of children creates a climate for cooking.

Eighty-one percent with children (compared to 67% without) say household members eat dinner together three or more times a week, and 30% of those who have children (versus 23% without) are cooking more now than five years ago. Of those cooking more, 28% of females claim that new children in the family have spurred the cooking increase.

Cooking is a pleasurable pursuit.

Sixty-three percent of survey respondents consider cooking a joy, and cooking enjoyment is growing among men. Fourteen percent of the men cooking more often than five years ago say they do so because they now have more interest in cooking.

Dinner remains both a frequent cooking occasion and an important American institution.

Seven of ten respondents say household members eat dinner together three or more times a week and eight of ten say they cook an evening meal several times a week or more. Importantly, these high percentages remain constant among mid-age (25-44) and family-oriented respondents.

Cooking shortcuts ease the cooking load.

Thirty-seven percent of respondents are defrosting/heating frozen foods in a microwave oven three or more times a week. Fifty-four percent are cooking on a barbecue grill, 41% bring home a complete cooked meal and 32% say someone other than the usual cook prepares the household's meals a couple of times a month or more. Shortcuts are especially popular among the 25-44 year olds, those with children and working females.

* All percentages are based on "involved" households.

Food Preparation Responsibility and Frequency

- *Women are the primary food preparers, but men make up a respectable and, most importantly, growing share.*
- *Most food preparers cook an evening meal several times a week or more.*
- *Cooking incidence is higher among those 45 and older but the growth is among the 25-44 year olds.*
- *Children create a climate not only for cooking but also for increased meal preparation.*
- *Working women may cook less than nonworking counterparts, but growth is among the workers.*

(Seven out of eight U.S. households are involved in food preparation.) While virtually all of the "involved" women polled (96%) consider themselves to be the primary person responsible for cooking meals, about half (47%) of males in "involved" households see themselves as the main person who cooks.* Cooking frequency is substantial. Eight of ten food preparers (81%) cook an evening meal several times a week or more. Half do so nearly every day (51%) and three in ten prepare the evening meal several times a week. An additional one in ten (11%) cooks an evening meal once a week.

* All data in the rest of the summary are based on "involved" households.

The study confirms that women continue to be the food preparers cooking most frequently, but men represent an important and growing segment. While about double the percentage of women (63%) versus men cook an evening meal nearly every day, three in ten (29%) men are bearing that responsibility. Not only that, but consider that while only 20% of females admit to cooking more than five years ago, that's true of 35% of the men.

Age, presence of children, and work habits also must be factored into the equation:

- Survey participants ages 25-44 are less likely to cook an evening meal every day (45%) than those 45 or more (58%), but their cooking frequency is increasing. (Thirty-five percent of the 25-44's report cooking more than five years ago versus 11% for the 45 + group.)
- Fifty-two percent of food preparers with children versus 50% without children cook an evening meal nearly every day. Survey participants in homes with children also are cooking more often than those without children (30% versus 23% respectively).
- Nonworking females (75%) are more likely to cook the evening meal nearly every day than females who work (53%). However, 24% of working women say they're cooking more, while only 16% of nonworking women are doing so.

TABLE 1

"Are you the main person in your household who cooks meals for the household, or is someone else?"

	Total Households	Total Males	Total Females	Involved Households Total	Involved Households Males	Involved Households Females	Uninvolved Households Total	Uninvolved Households Males
Respondent is main person	72%	41%	95%	78%	47%	96%	31%	21%
Someone else is	26	56	4	20	51	2	65	75
Other	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	4
(Base)	(862)	(339)	(523)	(757)	(253)	(504)	(105)	(86)

TABLE 2

"How often would you say you, yourself, cook an evening meal for your household: nearly every day; several times a week; once a week; one or two times a month; less than once a month; or not at all?"

		Involved Food Preparers					
	(Base)	Nearly Every Day	Several Times a Week	Once a Week	One or Two Times a Month	Less than Once a Month	Not at All
Total Involved	(757)	51%	30	11	6	1	2
Involved Males	(253)	29%	35	16	15	2	3
Involved Females	(504)	63%	27	8	*	0	1
Age							
25-44	(375)	45%	32	13	7	1	1
45 or more	(325)	58%	26	9	4	*	3
Children							
Children in household	(325)	52%	27	9	9	2	2
No children in household	(432)	50%	31	12	4	0	1
Work (Females)							
Work	(295)	53%	35	11	1	0	*
Do not work	(206)	75%	17	5	0	0	2

Less than 1%

TABLE 3

"Compared with five years ago, do you yourself cook more often, less often, or about the same?"

		Involved Food Preparers			
	(Base)	More Often	Less Often	About the Same	Don't Know/ No Opinion
Total Involved	(757)	25%	28	47	0
Involved Males	(253)	35%	16	49	0
Involved Females	(504)	20%	35	46	0
Age					
25-44	(375)	35%	25	41	0
45 or more	(325)	11%	33	56	0
Children					
Children in household	(325)	30%	23	47	0
No children in household	(432)	23%	30	47	0
Work (Females)					
Work	(295)	24%	40	36	0
Do not work	(206)	16%	29	56	0

*Less than 1%.

Alterations in Cooking Patterns and Cooking Equipment

- *Alterations in household size and composition account for many changes in cooking frequency.*
- *When a female spouse goes to work it spurs male cooking activity.*
- *Males stand out as the sex with a growing interest in cooking.*
- *Both sexes enjoy cooking, and the luster is dimmed only a bit among working women and households with children.*

Predictably, adding or subtracting children, getting married/living with someone or a move to living alone creates the right climate for a change in cooking habits. Cooking by *women* is most altered by the presence of children. Given that when children come into the family women cook more often (28%) than five years ago, it follows that when children leave home women cook less often (35%). A secondary reason for *women* to cook *more* is cohabitation; 24% got married or are living with someone. (But it's the same reason that 22% of *men* give for cooking *less*.)

It would seem the reverse should be true. Seventeen percent of men do cook more because they're now living by themselves. Yet 11% of *women* also cook *more* as a result of beginning to live singly, indicating that in some cases women may miss a man's cooking contributions or miss someone for whom to cook. Some men evidently will shoulder part of the cooking load when a wife/partner enters the work force. Fourteen percent admit to cooking more for that reason.

Surprisingly, the *increased interest* in cooking is found almost totally among men (14% say increased interest is the reason for cooking more often versus 1% for females), but this may simply reflect the fact that women are already very interested in cooking.

Cooking is a joy for survey participants (63% agree). While nonworking women and those households without children echo this sentiment (64% and 65% enjoy respectively), working females and respondents with children are a bit more ambivalent. Only 58% of each group enjoy cooking, and a higher percentage consider it a chore (31% and 32% respectively) than nonworking/childless respondents.

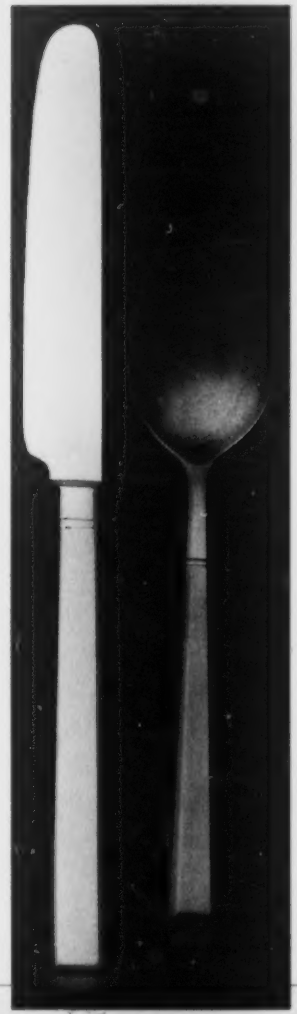


TABLE 4

"What are the main reasons for this change?"

(Base = Those who cook more often or less often compared with five years ago.)

	Those Who Cook More Often			Those Who Cook Less Often		
	Total Involved	Involved Males	Involved Females	Total Involved	Involved Males	Involved Females
New children in family (those who cook more)/ Children left home (those who cook less)	16%	5%	28%	28%	5%	35%
Married/started living with someone	15	6	24	7	22	3
Now living by myself	14	17	11	6	2	8
Have more interest in cooking	8	14	1	(Does not apply)		
Spouse/partner went to work	7	14	0	(Not mentioned)		
(Base)	(198)	(90)	(108)	(216)	(43)	(173)

(Multiple response accepted)
(Main mentions)

TABLE 5

"In general, would you say you enjoy cooking, or do you think of it as just a necessary chore?"

				Involved Food Preparers			
	Total Involved	Involved Males	Involved Females	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Children in Household	No Children in Household
Enjoy	63%	65%	62%	58%	64%	58%	65%
Chore	27	25	29	31	28	32	25
Both	9	9	9	10	7	10	8
Neither	1	1	*	1	0	*	1
Don't know/ No opinion	*	1	*	*	*	*	1
(Base)	(757)	(253)	(504)	(295)	(206)	(325)	(432)

* Less than ½%.

Cooking Methods

- *Microwaving and barbecuing are popular and growing ways of cooking.*
- *In general microwave use is more pronounced among the 25-44 age group and those with children; the greatest growth also is by these groups and among working women.*
- *The 25-44 year olds, respondents with children and working females are by far more likely to barbecue and also are the growing segment.*
- *Across the board, growth in usage of the various cooking methods is more pronounced among 25-44 year olds, those with children and working females than their older, childless and nonworking counterparts.*

Defrosting/heating frozen foods in a microwave is engaged in almost on a daily basis by 37% of survey participants. More 25-44 year olds (40%) and respondents with children (41%) cook this way and do so more often than do their older (33%) and/or childless (36%) counterparts. Working women represent a growing segment in this area also. Of those who are defrosting/heating in a microwave *more often*, 34% are female workers versus only 23% for nonworking females. The figures for "cooking fresh vegetables in a microwave" seem to nearly reverse the trends noted above. The data are deceiving, however, because *fresh vegetable usage* is generally higher among older respondents, those without children and nonworking females.*

Barbecuing, stir frying, using a food processor and cooking meat, poultry or fish are accomplished less often but are no less interesting. The dramatic differences are in barbecuing. While 54% of total respondents barbecue a couple times a month or more, 25-44 year olds (69%), those with children (72%) and working females (59%) are far more likely to barbecue than those in reversed circumstances. The mid-age group, those with children and working women also are far more likely to say barbecuing is done *more* often now (23% versus 5%, 21% versus 12% and 21% versus 9% respectively). Of special note also is that men are seemingly the trendsetters for cooking meat, poultry or fish in a microwave oven (32% do so a couple times a month or more compared with 19% for females).

The most significant point may be that use of most methods of food preparation and cooking is more pronounced in the 25-44 year old group, those respondents with children and working females. In *every* case these groups are more likely to use the cooking methods listed "more often" than are those 45 and over, with no children or with a nonworking female. (This is true even in the case of "cooking fresh vegetables" in a microwave, even though the last named groups are bigger users of fresh vegetables in general.)

*The question of fresh vegetable usage is covered in the survey booklet on nutrition.

TABLE 6

*"I'd like to ask about use of various **cooking methods.** I'd like to know how often you use these methods in your household using the same answer categories you wrote down, and then whether it is more often or less often than a year or two ago. With (ITEM), how often does this occur in your household?"*

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation.)

Nearly Every Day, Three or Four Times a Week

	Total	Males	Females	25-44	45 - Over	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females
Defrosting and/ or heating frozen foods in a micro-wave oven	37%	37%	38%	40%	33%	41%	36%	38%	38%
Cooking fresh vegetables in a micro-wave oven	19	14	22	19	20	21	18	19	26

Nearly Every Day, Three or Four Times a Week, Once or Twice a Week, A Couple Times a Month

Cooking on a barbecue grill	54	57	51	69	39	72	44	59	44
Stir-frying in a wok or skillet	42	42	42	42	41	41	42	38	48
Using a food processor	30	31	30	30	32	32	29	28	33
Cooking meat, poultry or fish in a microwave oven	24	32	19	27	22	28	23	21	19
(Base)	(757)	(253)	(504)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)

TABLE 7

*"Is that **more often, less often,** or **about the same** as, say, a year or two ago?"*

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation and the following cooking method is used in household.)

	Total	Males	Females	25-44	45 - Over	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females
% Say more often:									
Defrosting and/or heating frozen foods in a microwave oven	30%	33%	29%	37%	23%	35%	28%	34%	23%
Cooking fresh vegetables in a microwave oven	18	19	18	23	14	23	16	21	14
Cooking on a barbecue grill	15	14	15	23	5	21	12	21	9
Cooking meat, poultry or fish in a microwave oven	14	17	11	19	9	17	12	14	9
Stir-frying in a wok or skillet	14	10	16	17	11	16	13	17	16
Using a food processor	13	13	12	15	10	13	12	15	10
(Base range)	(747-757)	(249-253)	(498-504)	(372-375)	(318-325)	(323-325)	(424-432)	(292-295)	(203-206)

Meal Consumption Habits

- *The greater majority say household members eat dinner together regularly.*
- *Not surprisingly, lunch is the meal most often eaten away from home.*
- *Convenience options (such as bringing home fully cooked food or having it delivered) are employed, especially among the mid-age group, those with children and working women.*
- *Over half prepare and freeze a main dish for later use a couple times a month or more.*
- *Sharing the cooking role is most popular among the mid-age group and those with children.*
- *Six of ten try a new recipe a couple times a month or more.*

Respondents exhibit an interesting mix of new and traditional eating patterns. Despite suggestions to the contrary, the sanctity of the dinner hour seems fairly secure, especially for those with children. Seventy-one percent of survey participants eat dinner together nearly every day or three or four times a week. (Eighty-one percent with children, versus 67% without, do so.) Important here too is that there's little erosion in the younger age group (75% of 25-44 year olds eat dinner together versus 70% of the 45 and overs).

The real story, however, may be the fact that family meals are being preserved by using occasional convenience options. Especially interesting is the practice of bringing home or having delivered already prepared food. Forty-one percent of total respondents bring home a *complete* meal, 36% *part* of a meal and 27% have a meal *ordered* and *delivered* a couple times a month or more. In all cases, usage of the methods by mid-age survey participants, those with children and working women is *significantly higher* than the total, while those in opposite circumstances show the reverse.

When it comes to eating outside the home, it's predictable that those whose lives might require them to eat away from home do so. For example, in a world where many people work, it's not surprising that 62% of the total eat lunch and 17% eat breakfast outside the home three or more times a week. It also follows that the 25-44 year olds, those with children and working women show even higher percentages for these activities and time periods, than those in opposite circumstances, because again someone is likely to be in the work force. Restaurant eating shows a similar pattern. As would be logical, the 25-44 age group and working women are more likely to eat at restaurants than those older and nonworking.

- Twenty percent of those 25-44 versus 17% that are 45 and over eat out at a restaurant three or more times a week.
- Twenty-two percent of working females versus 15% for nonworking females do the same.

Interesting too is the usage of two other convenience options: 1) preparing and freezing one or more main dishes for later use and 2) having the cooking done by someone other than the usual cook. While 52% of total survey participants freeze ahead meals a couple times a month or more, that's true of 46% of those with children and working women, indicating that time may be the limiting factor here. Sharing of cooking roles, on the other hand, is evidently an especially viable means to spread the cooking for adults with children and the mid-age group. For example, while 32% of total households say someone other than the usual person cooks a couple times a month or more, that's true of 39% of 25-44 year olds and 38% of those with children. The only surprise is among working women. They are slightly less likely than the total to shift the cooking load to another person a couple times a month or more (32% for total compared with 31% for

working women) but still move that cooking chore to someone else more often than nonworking women (23%).

Last but not least is the question of how often adults are trying a new recipe from a cookbook, magazine or other recipe source. The story is among households with children. For example, while six of ten adults (57%) try a recipe a couple times a month or more, that's true of 67% of adults with children but only 52% of respondents without children.

TABLE 8

*"I'm going to mention a number of things that have to do with **cooking and eating meals**. Would you please tell me how often each item or event occurs in your household. Beginning with (ITEM), how often does this occur in your household?"*
(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation.)

Nearly Every Day, Three or Four Times a Week/Once or Twice a Week, A Couple Times a Month

	Total Households	25-44	45 & Over	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females
All household members eat dinner together	71%/12%	75%/13%	70%/11%	81%/12%	67%/13%	71%/12%	79%/7%
One or more household members eat **lunch** outside the home	62/20	77/15	48/25	81/14	53/24	77/16	43/25
One or more household members eat out at a restaurant	19/58	20/61	17/55	17/61	20/57	22/59	15/56
One or more household members eat **breakfast** outside	17/19	23/19	13/18	24/15	14/21	20/16	13/17
One or more main dishes are prepared and frozen for use later	9/43	9/40	9/46	8/38	9/46	7/39	6/46
Someone other than the person who usually prepares the household's meals prepares a complete meal for the family	5/27	6/33	5/20	5/33	5/24	3/28	3/20
Someone brings home a **complete** meal that is cooked outside the home	4/37	5/49	1/26	3/49	5/30	3/42	2/28
A new recipe from a cookbook, magazine or other source of recipes is tried	4/53	4/58	3/50	6/61	3/49	2/60	5/54
Someone brings home **part** of a meal that is cooked outside the home	3/33	3/42	3/25	1/41	4/29	3/41	1/23
A meal that is cooked outside the home is **ordered and delivered**	1/26	1/38	*/13	1/37	1/20	1/28	0/15
(Base)	(757)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)

*Less than 1%

Methodology

The data for this survey were collected from 862 telephone interviews conducted in September and October 1987 by Opinion Research Corporation. Households contacted for the survey were selected by using ORC's Random Digit Dialing (RDD) system to create a random sample of U.S. telephone households that closely approximates the total U.S. population. However, a statistical weighting procedure also was employed when the data were tabulated to bring the survey results into balance with actual universe proportions. The RDD system excludes commercial numbers and includes unlisted and new telephone numbers as well as listed numbers.

Each household was screened by the following two criteria:

1) male or female head of household
2) degree of involvement in cooking all or part of an evening meal

Heads of household who cooked all of an evening meal at least once a month, as well as those preparing part of that meal at least once a week, were considered to be "involved" food preparers living in "involved" households. Those preparing all or part of an evening meal less often than that were considered to be "uninvolved" food preparers living in "uninvolved" households. Since the vast majority were "involved" households and because "involved" respondents offer the most valuable information on food use and shopping patterns, the information in this summary has been limited only to these households.

Demographic Profile of Involved Food Preparers: 1987

	Number in Sample	Percentage
Total Involved Food Preparers	757	100%
Sex		
Men	253	37
Women	504	63
Working	295	54
Nonworking	206	44

	Total	Males	Females
Marital Status			
Married	61%	60%	61%
Single, widowed, divorced, separated	40	40	38
Spouse Works	72%	64%	76%
Age			
Under 25	6%	8%	5%
25-34	23	29	20
35-44	21	22	20
45-54	15	12	17
55-64	15	14	16
65-74	13	12	13
75 and over	7	3	9
Average Age	47 years	43 years	48 years
Education			
High school or less	47%	40%	52%
Some college/college grad.	42	47	39
Post graduate	10	13	8
Household Size			
One	24%	23%	25%
Two	33	35	32
Three	18	18	18
Four or more	25	24	25
Average Household Size	2.6	2.6	2.6
Type of Household			
With children	32%	32%	33%
Without children	66	68	66
Home Ownership			
Own home	67%	61%	71%
Rent home	33	39	29

	Total	Males	Females
Income			
Less than $20,000	32%	27%	35%
$20,000 - $39,000	33	36	32
$40,000 - $74,000	19	22	18
$75,000 or more	5	8	3
Average Income	$30,900	$35,300	$28,200
Race			
White	88%	86%	89%
Black	10	11	9
Oriental/Asian/ Pacific Indian	*	*	*
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1	1	1
Other	2	2	1
Region			
Northeast	23%	23%	23%
North Central	25	26	25
South	34	33	34
West	17	18	17

Northeast includes Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia.

North Central includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

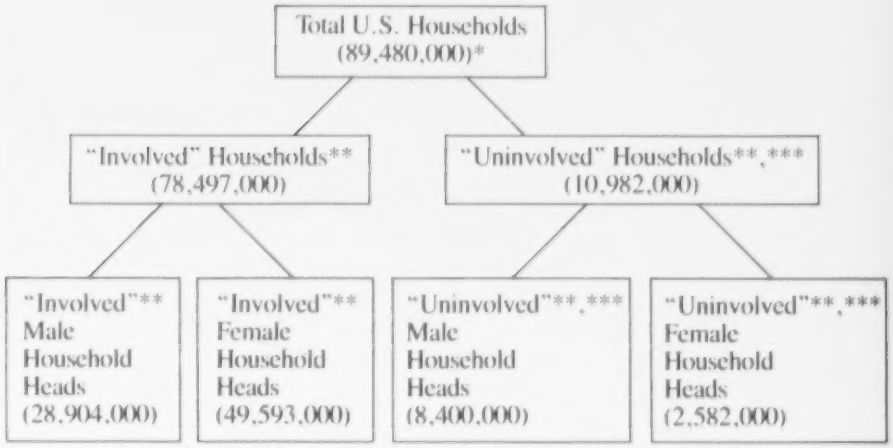
South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

West includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

*Less than ½%.

Projectability

Because it was important that the research data be projectable to the U.S. population, the following chart illustrates the size of the universe of U.S. households* and its composition in terms of the household subgroups that were surveyed**:


Total U.S. Households (89,480,000)*
"Involved" Households** (78,497,000)
"Uninvolved" Households**,*** (10,982,000)
"Involved"** Male Household Heads (28,904,000)
"Involved"** Female Household Heads (49,593,000)
"Uninvolved"**,*** Male Household Heads (8,400,000)
"Uninvolved"**,*** Female Household Heads (2,582,000)

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 411, **Households and Family Characteristics: March 1987,** U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1987 (Issued September 1987).

**For each of these subgroups the estimates are based on the level of incidence obtained during the interviewing process.

***It is important to note that these sub-universe estimates may overstate the true number of households in which *both* household heads are "uninvolved" food preparers. This is due to the fact that the operational definition of an "uninvolved" household used in this study is based on information about the interviewed head of household and does not directly take into account information about the other household head's level of involvement in food preparation.

Sampling Variation

With any study the results are subject to sampling variation, i.e., the difference between survey results and those that would be gathered by studying the entire population. In general, sampling variation is less when the size of the sample is large and the sample result approaches 0% or 100%, rather than being in a middle range. The following table shows the approximate range of sampling variation for involved males and females, two major groups described in this study. For example, in Table 2, 29% of involved males say they cook an evening meal nearly every day. This percentage is based on the sample of about 250 involved males. The table below shows that the sample variation for a 30% response at that base is plus or minus 6%.

Sampling Tolerances (+/−) at 95% Confidence Level for Involved Males and Females

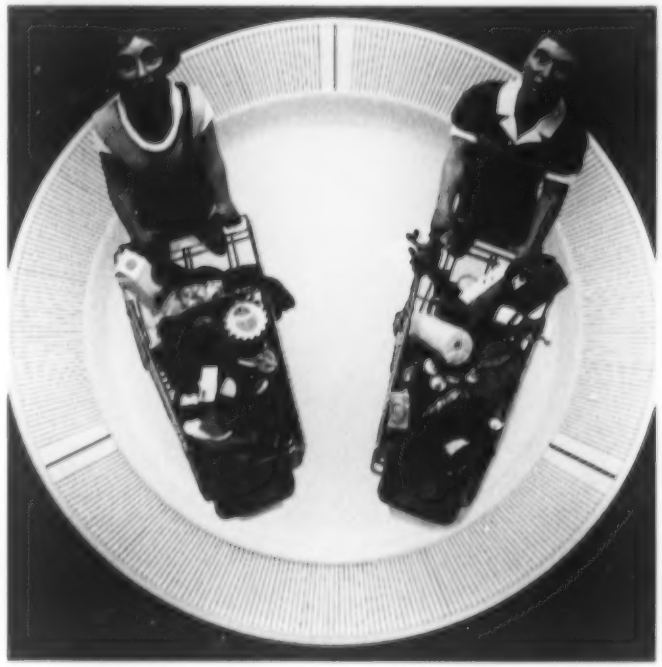
Sample Size	Type of Group	Approximate Sampling Tolerances 10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
500	"Involved" Females	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
250	"Involved" Males	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%

Applying the sampling variation to the 29% response, the true proportion of involved males who say they cook more often should be no less than 23% nor more than 35%.

In addition to the sampling variation that can be figured for a single piece of data, it's also helpful to determine whether the differences *between* certain percentages are real or the result of sampling variation. Looking at Table 2 again, while 29% of "involved" males say they cook more often, the same is true of 63% of "involved" females. The "involved" male data is based on 253 responses and involved females on 504 responses. The sampling tolerance is 7% and since there's a 34% differential between the two male/female percentages, the 7% is statistically significant.

Sampling Tolerances Levels (at 95% Confidence Level) To Use in Evaluating Differences Between Two Percentage Results

Sample Comparison	Approximate Sampling Tolerances 10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Various Key Subgroup Comparisons					
757 vs. 504	3%	5%	5%	6%	6%
253	4%	6%	7%	7%	7%
504 vs. 253	5%	6%	7%	7%	8%



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A Study of Time, Convenience and Entertaining

1988

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and Better Homes and Gardens Magazine
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Table of Contents

Page

Introduction 1

Special Notes 2

Survey Highlights 2

Detailed Findings

- Ease of Cooking 3
- Amount of Time Spent in Cooking and Meal Preparation 5
- Frequency of Entertaining Adults 8
- Type of Guests and Planning 10
- Changing Entertaining Patterns 11

Methodology 13

- Demographic Profile of Respondents 14
- Projectability 15
- Sampling Variation 16

Introduction

Pinpointing trends in food preparation or usage and supermarket shopping habits is critical for the Food Marketing Institute and Better Homes and Gardens® magazine in staying on target with the needs of America's consumers. With a goal of tracking these trends over five years, in 1987 the Food Marketing Institute and Better Homes and Gardens commissioned a study covering these areas:

- Food patterns and meal consumption.
- Nutrition.
- Information sources, planning and purchasing.

This summary on time, convenience and entertaining contains the results of the survey among "involved" food preparers and households. Only "involved" food preparers and households are documented, because they represent the vast majority of reporting households (757 from a total of 862) and because the most interesting information come from these.

The definition of involvement follows:

- **Involved Food Preparers:** Those male and female heads of household who reported preparing an evening meal in the household at least once a month or preparing part of an evening meal — a main dish, side dish, or dessert — at least once a week.
- **Involved Households:** Those households in which the interviewed head of household reported preparing an evening meal in the household at least once a month or part of an evening meal — a main dish, side dish, or dessert — at least once a week.

Additional summaries from this study covering 1) food patterns and meal consumption, 2) nutrition and 3) information sources, planning and purchasing are available. Supermarket personnel may obtain these from the Food Marketing Institute and manufacturers from Better Homes and Gardens magazine.

Special Notes

All charts are based on the 757 "involved" food preparers/households or a subsample noted after the specific question. "Involved" food preparers and "involved" households are used interchangeably. The percentages shown in each table are calculated on the base number noted. These percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple response.

In the text, when percentages are noted for a respondent, it is assumed that the survey participant is speaking for his or her household only.

For more specific information on the study and sampling tolerances, the methodology is found at the end of this summary.

While care has been taken to summarize study results completely, specific charts and applicable demographic groups have been selected to show the important points in the study.

Highlights on Time, Convenience and Entertaining

About half of survey participants say cooking is easier than five years ago.

Fifty-four percent of the sample say cooking and meal preparation is easier, and the 25-44 year olds, working females and those with children are in the most agreement. Four of 10 survey participants (42%) are cooking less than five years ago, while three of 10 (29%) admit to cooking more.

Demographics greatly affect time spent in cooking and meal preparation.

The average time spent cooking in a typical week is 7.7 hours, but women spend 8.9 hours cooking per week on average compared to 5.7 hours for men. Nonworking women spend the most time in meal preparation (10.0) and those with children spend a bit more time than those without children (7.9 versus 7.6 hours respectively).

Cooking is on the increase among those 25-44 and men.

While those age 25-44 and men spend a lower number of hours in cooking on the average than do respondents 45 and over and women, 36% of those 25-44 year olds and 39% of the men say this is an increase versus only 17% of those 45 and over and 24% of women.

Entertaining is frequent, with over half entertaining two or more times a month.*

About 55% of all demographic groups agree that they entertain two or more times a month. Nonworking females are the most likely to entertain once a week or more often (38%).

While those 45 and over and those without children entertain more frequently, the growth is among the 25-44 year olds and those with youngsters.

Thirty-four percent of those 45 and over entertain once a week or more often while that's true of 25% of the 25-44 year olds; and 32% of those with no children versus 27% of those with children have guests that frequently. However, 30% of the 25-44 year olds say this represents more entertaining compared to only 14% of the 45 and over group, while 29% of those with children play host more often but only 19% of those without youngsters do so.

Two thirds say relatives, and half agree friends, are the typical guests.

Sixty-four percent of respondents say relatives and, 56% say friends, are those they entertain typically. Those 25-44 are more likely to entertain friends (61%) than are those 45 and over (51%). Working women (72%) and those in two-income households (73%) are the most likely to host relatives.

The highest percentage (36%) don't plan specially for guests, but working women are bigger planners than nonworking women.

While 30% of working women and 35% of nonworking women say they plan the same for family as for entertaining, 28% of working women versus 14% of nonworking women agree that guests demand an extra effort.

Entertaining frequency is affected by the number of friends and/or by a recent move.

"More friends now" is given as the reason that 28% of respondents are entertaining more now than five years ago. A "new location/moved/fewer friends" is the reason 27% say they're doing less entertaining.

* Entertaining is defined as an occasion on which adults visited and food was served.

Ease of Cooking

- *Over half say cooking and meal preparation is easier than five years ago.*
- *Respondents 25-44, working females and those with children are the most likely to say the task is easier.*

Fifty-four percent of the total sample say cooking and meal preparation is easier than five years ago, not a surprising finding since the study reveals that respondents are employing convenience options to make their cooking patterns fit time demands.* Only eight percent say cooking is more difficult, while nearly four in ten say that task is about the same as it was five years ago. Two demographic groups, those 25-44 and working females, are much more likely to say the cooking load has eased than are their older and nonworking counterparts. For example, while 59% of 25-44 year olds and working women think cooking is easier, only 49% of those 45 or more and 47% of nonworking females say that is true. Noticeable too is that even those with children, who in all likelihood might experience more cooking demands with growing youngsters, still slightly outpace those without children (56% vs. 53%) in asserting that the cooking task is now easier.

* The question of convenience is covered in the survey booklet on food patterns and meal consumption.

Table 1

"As you see it, overall, is cooking and meal preparation easier, more difficult, or about the same as it was, say, five years ago?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation)

	Involved Households							
	Total	25–44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
Easier	54%	59%	49%	56%	53%	59%	47%	55%
More difficult	8	6	10	9	8	7	9	7
About the same	37	34	40	35	38	34	43	38
Was not involved in cooking / meal preparation five years ago	1	0	1	*	1	0	0	*
Don't know / no opinion	*	0	*	0	*	0	*	*
(Base)	(757)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)	(384)

* Less than ½%.

Amount of Time Spent in Cooking and Meal Preparation*

- *While the average hours in a typical week that men and women survey respondents spend in cooking and meal preparation is 7.7, time spent varies widely by demographic group. (For example, women spend an average of 8.9 hours.)*
- *Three of 10 survey participants are spending more time cooking, while four of 10 are cooking less than five years ago.*
- *While women, those 45 or more and nonworking women spend the most time in cooking and meal preparation, the greatest growth is among men and those 25-44.*
- *Change in time spent cooking is most dramatic among the 25-44 year olds and working women.*
- *Cooking time is slightly higher in households with children.*

The average hours spent per week by a survey participant may be 7.7, but the *real* story is that time spent in this pursuit is in flux and varies widely by demographic group. For example, while three of 10 (29%) respondents say they're spending more time on cooking and meal preparation than five years ago, more than four of 10 (42%) are spending less time. While women spend far more time on cooking in a typical week than men (8.9 hours versus 5.7 hours respectively), men are actually gaining on women in this area, since 39% of men (versus 24% of women) say their cooking hours represent an increase. Conversely nearly half of women (49%) say they're spending less time cooking, but that's true of only 31% of men.

Look at age and an unmistakeable pattern of change is revealed that's not readily apparent by focusing strictly on average time spent. For example, the *average* respondent 25-44 spends 7.2 hours per week on meal preparation while those 45 and over prepare meals 8.2 hours per week. However, the 25-44 year olds are *much more likely* to be *increasing* the time spent (36% of 25-44 year olds versus only 17% of those 45 or more are spending more hours on food preparation) and *much less likely* to be *decreasing* the hours spent (39% of 25-44 year olds are spending less time, but 48% of 45 and older respondents are spending less time).

As might be expected nonworking women, who logically may have more time to cook, are spending an average of 10 hours per week in meal preparation, while nonworking women are spending only eight hours a week. Of special interest here is that working women are changing more than nonworking women. A higher percentage of working women than nonworking women (25% versus 20%) say they are cooking *more* than five years ago *and* a higher percentage of working women also say they're cooking *less* (51% of working women cook less; 47% of nonworking women cook less).

Respondents with children are slightly more likely to spend more time cooking than those without children (7.9 versus 7.6 median hours per week).

* This information is covered in Tables 2 and 3.

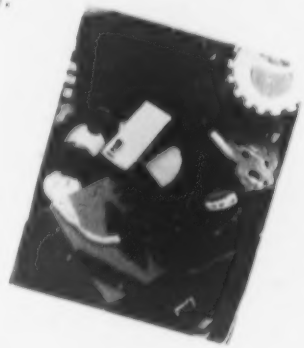
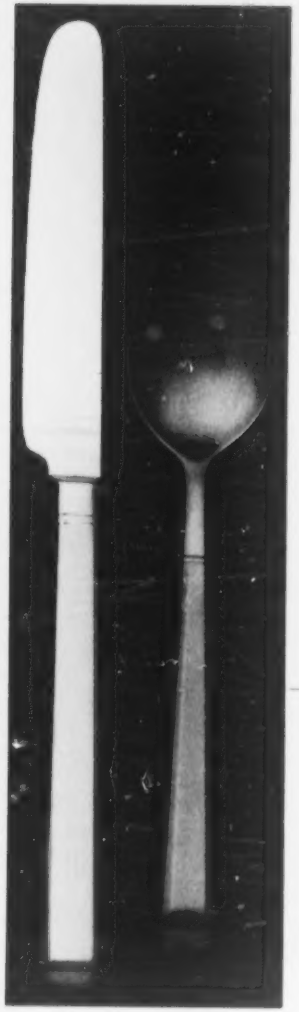


Table 2



"During a typical week, about how many hours do you, yourself, spend in cooking and meal preparation? This would include any food or meals which you are involved in preparing at home."

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation)

Involved Households

	Total	Males	Females	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females
1 - 4 hours	33%	51%	23%	35%	33%	31%	35%	24%	22%
5 - 10 hours	39	30	43	41	34	38	39	49	35
11 - 20 hours	18	11	22	16	20	20	17	20	24
21 hours or more	5	1	8	3	7	5	5	4	13
Don't know / no opinion / no response	5	6	4	5	5	6	5	3	5
Mean hours	7.7	5.7	8.9	7.2	8.2	7.9	7.6	8.0	10.0
(Base)	(757)	(253)	(504)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)

Table 3

"Is that more hours or fewer hours than you spent on cooking and meal preparation than, say, five years ago?"

(Base = Those who spend any time in cooking and meal preparation)

	Involved Households						
	Total	Males	Females	25-44	45 or More	Working Females	Nonworking Females
More	29%	39%	24%	36%	17%	25%	20%
Less	42	31	49	39	48	51	47
About the same	28	30	27	24	34	23	34
Don't know / no opinion	1	*	1	1	1	1	0
(Base)	(718)	(239)	(479)	(356)	(306)	(284)	(192)

*Less than ½%

Frequency of Entertaining Adults*

- *Three in 10 respondents (30%) say adults visit their home and food is served once a week or more often; over half (55%) say that scenario is reenacted two or more times a month.*
- *Nonworking females are more likely to say they entertain once a week or more (38%) than are those of any other demographic group noted.*
- *The 25-44 year olds and those with children are much more likely than their counterparts to register an increase in entertaining.*
- *Working women are more likely to be changing their entertaining frequency than nonworking women.*

Across the board, about 55% of respondents entertain two or more times a month. On the other hand, 30% of total survey participants entertain once a week or more often, but this percentage varies by demographic group.

Age Older respondents (45 or more) are somewhat more likely to entertain weekly (34%) than are those 25-44 (25%).

Children Those with no children also outpace respondents with youngsters in weekly entertaining (32% versus 27% respectively).

Working Thirty-eight percent of nonworking women entertain once a week or more often, but that's the case among only 29% of working females.

However, look at the above-stated facts and the picture is only partially complete. For it is among the younger age group and those with children where there is any real growth in entertaining. For example, 30% of the 25-44 year old group entertain more often and 28% entertain less than five years ago; however only 14% of the 45 or more group entertain with greater frequency, but 28% of this group have guests less often. That same relationship holds true for those with children. While nearly three in 10 (29%) of those with children agree they're entertaining more frequently, only 19% of those without youngsters are increasing entertaining.

Probably the group in the greatest state of flux is working women. While these respondents nearly match the total respondent figures in entertaining frequency, working women are more likely both to be entertaining more often (26% versus 21%) *and* less often than their nonworking counterparts (21% versus 27% respectively).

* "Entertaining" is used here and in the future to mean that respondents have had adults visit their homes and food is served. The summary above covers Tables 4 *and* 5.

Table 4

"How often do one or more adults visit your household and food is served? Would you say once a week or more often; two or three times a month; once a month; once every several months; rarely; or never?

	Involved Households							
	Total	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
Once a week or more often	30%	25%	34%	27%	32%	29%	38%	27%
	} 55%	} 54%	} 54%	} 55%	} 55%	} 55%	} 61%	} 56%
Two or three times a month	25	29	20	28	23	26	23	29
Once a month	21	21	22	22	21	23	16	24
Once every several months	11	12	11	13	10	13	9	12
Rarely	9	11	7	10	8	7	9	7
Never	4	2	7	1	6	3	5	1
No response	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Base)	(757)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)	(384)

Table 5

"Is that more often, less often, or about the same as five years ago?"

(Base = Those who have adults visit and food is served)

	Involved Households							
	Total	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
More often	22%	30%	14%	29%	19%	26%	21%	25%
Less often	29	28	28	26	30	37	27	29
About the same	49	42	58	44	51	37	52	45
Don't know / no opinion / no response	*	*	0	*	0	0	0	*
(Base)	(736)	(369)	(311)	(321)	(415)	(289)	(197)	(379)

*Less than ½%.

Type of Guests and Planning

- *Nearly two of three survey participants say relatives are the usual guests, while 56% say they typically host friends.*
- *Those 25-44 are more likely to entertain friends than those 45 and over.*
- *Working women and those in two-income households are the most likely to invite relatives.*
- *The highest percentage (36%) agree that planning for visitors doesn't differ from typical household meals.*
- *Working women are much more likely than nonworking women to use more planning/preparation time when expecting guests.*

The highest percentage of survey participants (64%) say they entertain relatives, a pattern that holds true for all the demographic groups shown. Working females (72%) and those in two-income households (73%) are the most likely to host relatives. Fifty-six percent of total respondents welcome friends into their home. Those 25-44 are the most likely to entertain friends (61%); adults 45 or more (51%) and working females (51%) are the least likely to do so.

Thirty-six percent of respondents state that there's no special planning for entertaining, although one in five agree they expend more planning time on guest occasions. That pattern is somewhat different, however, for working and nonworking women. While 28% of working women say entertaining takes more time for planning and preparation, that's true of only 14% of nonworking women.

Table 6

"When you have such adults visit and food is served, who would they typically be?"

(Base = Those who have adults visit and food is served)

		Involved Households						
	Total	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
Relatives	64%	62%	67%	67%	63%	72%	64%	73%
Friends (of respondent or other adult household member)	56	61	51	54	58	51	57	54
(Base)	(736)	(369)	(311)	(321)	(415)	(289)	(197)	(379)

(Multiple Responses Accepted)

(Main Mentions)

Table 7

"When adults visit your household and food is served, do you plan what you will serve in the same way as you typically plan the household's meals; in other words, how does planning to serve food for visitors differ?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal planning and who have adults visit and food is served)

	Involved Households		
	Total	Working Women	Nonworking Women
It doesn't differ / no special planning	36%	30%	35%
Take more time planning / preparing	20	28	14
Prepare larger meals / plan for more people	13	15	14
Try to plan / prepare / serve what guests will like	12	11	13
(Base)	(735)	(289)	(197)

(Multiple Responses Accepted

(Main Mentions)

Changing Entertaining Patterns

- *In most cases, the biggest reason that respondents entertain more often than five years ago is that they have more friends now.*
- *Fewer friends or a change in location is the major reason adults entertain less.*

Friends or the lack of friends seem to be a barometer for entertaining activity, especially among certain demographic groups. "More friends" is the reason given for an entertaining increase by nearly three of ten respondents (28%), while about the same percentage (27%) say they're hosts less because they have fewer friends (either because the respondents moved or for other reasons). Those 25-44 (31%) and those with children (34%) are far more likely to say that "more friends" has been the impetus for more entertaining than are those with opposite demographics. The highest percentage in the 45 and over group entertain more now because they "have planned family activities" (35%). That's only 10% among the 25-44 year olds.

Interesting, too, is a look at why working and nonworking women entertain less. Of special note is the fact that nearly one in five nonworking women say they're too lazy to entertain; only seven percent of working women agree.

*This information is covered in Tables 8 and 9.

Table 8

"Why do you have adults over more often than five years ago?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation and who have adults over more often that five years ago)

	Involved Households				
	Total	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household
More friends now	28%	31%	23%	34%	22%
Have planned family activities to keep us together	18	10	35	15	20
Have more time now	16	14	20	12	20
Have a home / house / more space	12	15	2	11	13
Moved / closer to friends and family	8	11	2	10	6
(Base)	(176)	(112)	(46)	(96)	(80)

(Multiple Responses Accepted)

(Main Mentions)

Table 9

"Why do you have adults over less often than five years ago?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation and who have adults over less often that five years ago)

	Involved Households		
	Total	Working Women	Nonworking Women
New location / moved / fewer friends	27%	27%	29%
Household has fewer members	20	22	14
Lack time (unspecified)	15	17	13
Don't have the time — work-related mentions	11	16	4
I'm lazy / too tired to entertain	9	7	19
(Base)	(219)	(103)	(57)

(Multiple Responses Accepted)

(Main Mentions)

Methodology

The data for this survey were collected from 862 telephone interviews conducted in September and October 1987 by Opinion Research Corporation. Households contacted for the survey were selected by using ORC's Random Digit Dialing (RDD) system to create a random sample of U.S. telephone households that closely approximates the total U.S. population. However, a statistical weighting procedure also was employed when the data were tabulated to bring the survey results into balance with actual universe proportions. The RDD system excludes commercial numbers and includes unlisted and new telephone numbers as well as listed numbers.

Each household was screened by the following two criteria:

1) male or female head of household
2) degree of involvement in cooking all or part of an evening meal

Heads of household who cooked all of an evening meal at least once a month, as well as those preparing part of that meal at least once a week, were considered to be "involved" food preparers living in "involved" households. Those preparing all or part of an evening meal less often than that were considered to be "uninvolved" food preparers living in "uninvolved" households. Since the vast majority were "involved" households and because "involved" respondents offer the most valuable information on food use and shopping patterns, the information in this summary has been limited only to these households.

Demographic Profile of Involved Food Preparers: 1987

	Number in Sample	Percentage
Total Involved Food Preparers	757	100%
Sex		
Men	253	37
Women	504	63
Working	295	54
Nonworking	206	44

	Total	Males	Females
Marital Status			
Married	61%	60%	61%
Single, widowed, divorced, separated	40	40	38
Spouse Works	72%	64%	76%
Age			
Under 25	6%	8%	5%
25-34	23	29	20
35-44	21	22	20
45-54	15	12	17
55-64	15	14	16
65-74	13	12	13
75 and over	7	3	9
Average Age	47 years	43 years	48 years
Education			
High school or less	47%	40%	52%
Some college/college grad.	42	47	39
Post graduate	10	13	8
Household Size			
One	24%	23%	25%
Two	33	35	32
Three	18	18	18
Four or more	25	24	25
Average Household Size	2.6	2.6	2.6
Type of Household			
With children	32%	32%	33%
Without children	66	68	66
Home Ownership			
Own home	67%	61%	71%
Rent home	33	39	29

	Total	Males	Females
Income			
Less than $20,000	32%	27%	35%
$20,000 - $39,000	33	36	32
$40,000 - $74,000	19	22	18
$75,000 or more	5	8	3
Average Income	$30,900	$35,300	$28,200
Race			
White	88%	86%	89%
Black	10	11	9
Oriental/Asian/ Pacific Indian	*	*	*
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1	1	1
Other	2	2	1
Region			
Northeast	23%	23%	23%
North Central	25	26	25
South	34	33	34
West	17	18	17

Northeast includes Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia.

North Central includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

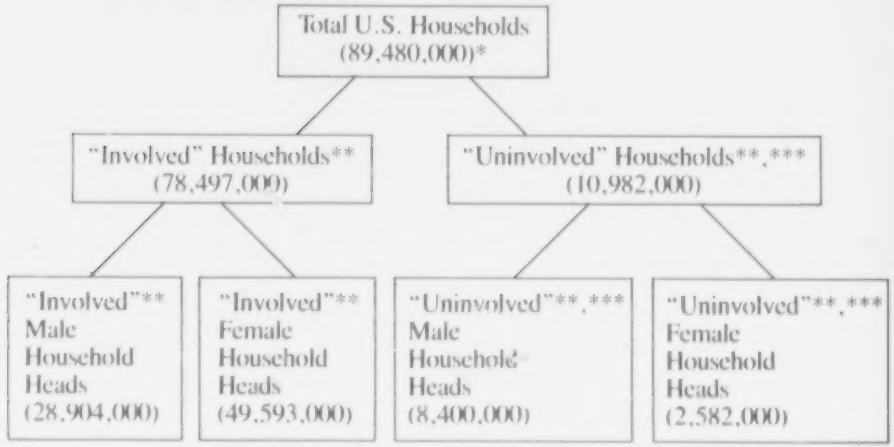
South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

West includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

*Less than ½%.

Projectability

Because it was important that the research data be projectable to the U.S. population, the following chart illustrates the size of the universe of U.S. households* and its composition in terms of the household subgroups that were surveyed**:


Total U.S. Households (89,480,000)*
"Involved" Households** (78,497,000)
"Uninvolved" Households**,*** (10,982,000)
"Involved"** Male Household Heads (28,904,000)
"Involved"** Female Household Heads (49,593,000)
"Uninvolved"**,*** Male Household Heads (8,400,000)
"Uninvolved"**,*** Female Household Heads (2,582,000)

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 411, **Households and Family Characteristics: March 1987,** U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1987 (Issued September 1987).

**For each of these subgroups the estimates are based on the level of incidence obtained during the interviewing process.

***It is important to note that these sub-universe estimates may overstate the true number of households in which *both* household heads are "uninvolved" food preparers. This is due to the fact that the operational definition of an "uninvolved" household used in this study is based on information about the interviewed head of household and does not directly take into account information about the other household head's level of involvement in food preparation.

Sampling Variation

With any study the results are subject to sampling variation i.e., the difference between survey results and those that would be gathered by studying the entire population. In general, sampling variation is less when the size of the sample is large and the sample result approaches 0% or 100%, rather than being in a middle range. The following table shows the approximate range of sampling variation for involved males and females, two major groups described in this study. For example, in Table 1, 59% of those 25-44 say cooking and meal preparation is easier. This percentage is based on the sample of 375 adults 25-44. The table below shows that the sample variation for a 59% response at that base is plus or minus 5%.

Sampling Tolerances (+ / −) at 95% Confidence Level for Involved Males and Females

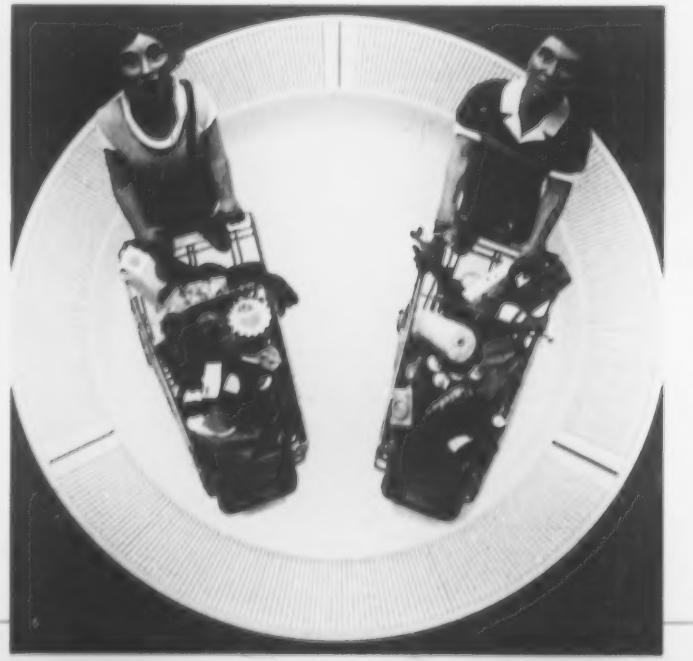
Sample Size	Type of Group	Approximate Sampling Tolerances 10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
375	Adults 25-44	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%
325	Adults 45 and over	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%

Applying the sampling variation to the 59% response, the true proportion of 25-44 year old respondents who say cooking is easier should be no less than 54% nor more than 64%.

In addition to the sampling variation that can be figured for a single piece of data, it's also helpful to determine whether the differences *between* certain percentages are real or the result of sampling variation. Looking at Table 1 again, while 59% of adults 25-44 say cooking is easier, the same is true of 49% of those 45 or more. The 25-44 year old data is based on 375 responses and the 45 and over on 325 responses. The sampling tolerance is 7% and since there's a 10% differential between the two age range percentages, this difference is statistically significant.

Sampling Tolerances Levels (at 95% Confidence Level) To Use in Evaluating Differences Between Two Percentage Results

Sample Comparison	Approximate Sampling Tolerances 10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Various Key Subgroup Comparisons					
757 vs. 375	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
325	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
375 vs. 325	4%	6%	7%	7%	7%



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A Study of Nutrition

1988

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and Better Homes and Gardens Magazine
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Table of Contents

Page

Introduction 1

Special Notes 1

Survey Highlights 2

Detailed Findings

- Concern About Specific Nutrition Issues 2
- Consumption of Specific Foods 5
- Changes in Food Usage 7
- Changes in Consumption Frequency 8
- Reasons for Changing Consumption 10

Methodology 13

Demographic Profile of Respondents 14

Projectability 15

Sampling Variation 16

Introduction

Pinpointing trends in food preparation or usage and super market shopping habits is critical for the Food Marketing Institute and Better Homes and Gardens® magazine in staying on target with the needs of America's consumers. With a goal of tracking these trends over five years, in 1987 the Food Marketing Institute and Better Homes and Gardens commissioned a study covering these areas:

- Food patterns and meal consumption.
- Nutrition.
- Time, convenience and entertaining.
- Information sources, planning and purchasing.

This summary on nutrition contains the results of the survey among "involved" food preparers and households. Only "involved" food preparers and households are documented, because they represent the vast majority of reporting households (757 from a total of 862) and because the most interesting information comes from these.

The definition of involvement follows:

- **Involved Food Preparers:** Those male and female heads of household who reported preparing an evening meal in the household at least once a month or preparing part of an evening meal — a main dish, side dish, or dessert — at least once a week.
- **Involved Households:** Those households in which the interviewed head of household reported preparing an evening meal in the household at least once a month or part of an evening meal — a main dish, side dish, or dessert — at least once a week.

Additional summaries from this study covering 1) food-patterns and meal consumption, 2) time, convenience and entertaining and 3) information sources, planning and purchasing are available. Supermarket personnel may obtain these from the Food Marketing Institute and manufacturers from Better Homes and Gardens magazine.

Special Notes

All charts are based on the 757 "involved" food preparers/households or a subsample noted after the specific question. "Involved" food preparers and "involved" households are used interchangeably. The percentages shown in each table are calculated on the base number noted. These percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple response.

In the text, when percentages are noted for a respondent, it is assumed that the survey participant is speaking for his or her household only. Percentages with the percent sign running down are to be read across; those with the percent sign running across are to be read down.

For more specific information on the study and sampling tolerances, the methodology is found at the end of this summary.

While care has been taken to summarize study results completely, specific charts and applicable demographic groups have been selected to show the important points in the study.

Highlights on Nutrition

There is growing concern about nutrition.

Approximately seven in 10 agree that freshness and nutritional content of food are of more interest than a year or two ago. About six of 10 say interest is greater in using foods high in fiber (65%), lower in cholesterol (64%) and lower in fat (62%), as well as 59% with more interest in dieting and weight control.

Nutrition interest differs among demographic groups.

Lifestage logically creates different nutrition concerns. Probably because they are in the family formation years, younger adults, those with children and working women are most interested in broad nutrition concerns (such as the freshness of food in-store) than those with opposite demographics. However, for example, the 45 + group leads the 25-44 year olds in interest in high fiber and lower cholesterol foods.

Children increase nutrition interest.

Nearly across the board a higher percentage of those with children than without expressed more concern than a year or two ago on general and specific nutrition issues.

Red meat is still a more frequent menu item than fish or chicken, but it's a prime target for decreased consumption.

Red meat is used three or more times a week by 34% of respondents, while chicken or poultry is eaten that often by 25% and fish or seafood by 10%. Yet red meat (28%) ranks right behind eggs (29%) as the protein selected less often than a year or two ago by food preparers. By far the highest percentage (26%) say that red meat is the food item most changed in consumption over the past year or two.

The highest percentage of the sample (about one quarter) are eating fresh fruit, chicken or other poultry, fresh vegetables and fish or other seafood more often.

Twenty-six percent say they eat chicken or poultry and/or fresh fruit more often; 24% are eating fish or other seafood and/or fresh vegetables more frequently. Those 25-44 are especially likely to be increasing consumption of these foods.

About one quarter have decreased consumption of eggs, red meat, chocolate and/or ice cream.

Foods that are consumed less frequently include eggs (29%), red meat (28%), chocolate (25%) and ice cream (23%).

The "most changed" foods are protein sources: red meat, chicken or other poultry and fish or other seafood; the reasons given are health concerns and taste.

One food preparer in four (26%) reports that red meat consumption has changed most, followed by chicken or poultry (15%) and fish or seafood (11%).

Concern About Specific Nutrition Issues

- *All nutrition issues listed are of more concern to about half or more of respondents than they were a year or two ago.*
- *Two broad areas top the list: 1) the freshness of foods in stores and 2) nutritional content of food.*
- *The younger age group, those with children and working women are the most likely to express these broad concerns.*
- *Four specific topics elicit the most interest (listed in descending order): 1) using foods high in fiber, 2) trying lower cholesterol foods, 3) using lower fat items and 4) dieting and weight control.*
- *Those with children generally are most interested in both the broad and specific health issues.*

Many respondents are more concerned about health and nutrition issues than they were a year or two ago. The fact that interest is high in all areas (not just in weight control) indicates that the concern is more than just for cosmetic reasons. Of nine possible nutrition topics, 1) knowing whether foods in stores are fresh when purchased and 2) interest in the nutritional content of the foods that are eaten, were chosen by the highest percentage (69% for each) as of greater interest than a year or two ago.

Of special note is that these issues are of even greater interest to those who are likely to be heavy food consumers (survey participants in the 25-44 age group and those with children), as well as to working females.

- Seventy-one percent of those 25-44 are concerned over freshness versus 66% of those 45 or more. That's also true of 75% with children in the household but of only 67% without, as well as 74% of working but only 61% of nonworking females.
- The story on increased interest in foods' nutritional content mirrors that for freshness. Seventy-five percent of the 25-44 year olds have an increased interest versus 63% of those 45 or more. Seventy-six percent of those with children, but only 65% of those without have more interest in nutrition now. That's true of 75% of working versus 62% of nonworking females.

In addition to the two general areas of freshness and nutrition, respondents were asked about seven specific topics. Survey participants exhibit greater interest than a year or two ago in these topics (listed in descending order): using foods high in fiber (65%), using foods lower in cholesterol (64%), using foods lower in fat (62%), interest in dieting and weight control (59%), cutting down on sodium (57%), using foods low in sugar (49%) and using foods that are higher in calcium (45%). While not as dramatic as the percentages on the broad nutrition topics, there are some surprising differences in response by specific demographics. Here are the most notable areas.

- Age dictates different priorities. For example, a higher percentage of those age 45 + , versus those 25-44, are more interested in high-fiber foods (68% for the 45 + group compared to 64% for the 25-44 year olds) as well as low-cholesterol foods (67% versus 61%). The younger group is more heavily interested in low-fat foods (65% for 25-44 year olds compared to 58% for the 45 and older group), dieting and weight control (60% versus 57%) and low-sugar foods (52% compared to 46%).
- Those with children generally are more interested in specific health issues than those without children. For example, 66% with children but only 60% without youngsters use lower fat foods while 63% versus 57% care about dieting and weight control.
- Another area to target is that of two-income households. A higher percentage of those with two breadwinners are interested in lower cholesterol food (69%) and dieting/weight control (65%) than either those in households with working females (61% versus 62% respectively) or nonworking females (66% and 57% respectively).

Table 1

*"Compared with a year or two ago, would you say **your** interest and that of **other** household members in (ITEM) has increased or decreased?*

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation.)

	Percent Noted Increased Interest — Involved Households							
	Total	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
Concern over whether foods in stores are fresh when purchased	69%	71%	66%	75%	67%	74%	61%	71%
Interest in the nutritional content of the foods that are eaten	69	75	63	76	65	75	62	72
Using foods that are high in fiber	65	64	68	63	66	70	65	66
Using foods that are lower in cholesterol	64	61	67	65	63	61	66	69
Using foods that are lower in fat	62	65	58	66	60	66	60	64
Interest in dieting and weight control	59	60	57	63	57	62	57	65
Cutting down use of salt or other sources of sodium	57	58	57	60	56	58	59	61
Using foods that are low in sugar	49	52	46	51	48	53	49	53
Using foods that are higher in calcium	45	43	45	45	44	48	43	44
(Base)	(757)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)	(384)

Consumption of Specific Foods

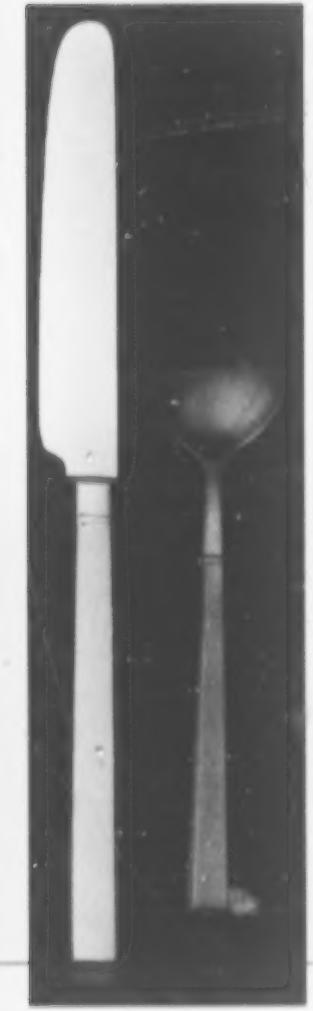
- *Fresh vegetables and fresh fruits are very popular food choices. Nearly three of four select these several times a week.*
- *Of red meat, poultry and fish, red meat is still the most frequently consumed protein source. Chicken or poultry comes in second and fish or seafood trails a distant third.*
- *Food usage differs by age group. Those 25-44 are more likely to eat cheese, chocolate and pasta more often than those 45 and over, while the older group consumes fresh fruit, fresh vegetables and ice cream on a more regular basis.*

Of eleven kinds of food, fresh fruit and fresh vegetables are the two items eaten frequently by a high percentage of survey participants. Seventy-five percent say fresh fruit and 72% say fresh vegetables are consumed three or more times a week. Following are cheese (eaten by 55% that frequently), red meat (34%), frozen vegetables (33%) and eggs (32%). Interesting, too, is that while red meat is used three or more times a week by a third of respondents, chicken or poultry is eaten that often by only 25% and fish or seafood by only 10%.

Of special note, too, is the wide variance in food consumption by age group. For example, while both the 25-44 and 45 and over groups consume fresh vegetables regularly, 82% of those 45 + have fresh vegetables three or more times a week, while that's true of only 70% of those 25-44. The same relationship is true for fresh fruit consumption. Here 77% of those 45 and older eat fresh fruit three or more times a week, but only 68% of those 25-44 do the same. On the other hand, cheese is more popular with the 25-44 age group. Sixty-one percent of those 25-44 eat cheese three or more times a week, but that's true of only 48% of those 45 and over.

Important, too, is the consumption of foods on a less regular basis. For instance, 74% of respondents 25-44 eat pasta a couple of times a month or more, but that's true of only 60% of those 45 and over. A similar pattern appears with chocolate consumption. While about the same percentage of both groups eat chocolate three or more times a week, an additional 52% of those 25-44, compared to 39% of those 45 and over, consume chocolate once or twice a week or a couple times a month.

Table 2



"And now I'd like to ask about use of various ***types of food.*** *I'd like to know how often each one is eaten in your household, and then whether that is more often or less often than a year or two ago. Beginning with (ITEM), how often does this occur in your household?"*

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation.)

Total Involved Households

	Total		25-44		45 and Over	
	Nearly Every Day/ Three or Four Times a Week	Once or Twice a Week/ A Couple of Times a Month	Nearly Every Day/ Three or Four Times a Week	Once or Twice a Week/ A Couple of Times a Month	Nearly Every Day/ Three or Four Times a Week	Once or Twice a Week/ A Couple of Times a Month
Fresh vegetables	75%	20%	70%	24%	82%	16%
Fresh fruit	72	20	68	25	77	14
Cheese	55	36	61	35	48	38
Red meat: such as beef, pork, lamb	34	56	36	56	33	56
Frozen vegetables	33	45	32	44	35	46
Eggs	32	52	30	55	33	51
Ice cream and other frozen desserts	27	51	23	61	31	44
Chicken or poultry	25	70	25	72	25	70
Chocolate	16	44	16	52	15	39
Pasta	11	66	13	74	9	60
Fish or seafood	10	72	9	73	12	72
(Base)	(757)		(375)		(325)	

Changes in Food Usage

- *Approximately two thirds to three quarters of respondents say consumption of selected foods has remained the same.*
- *About one quarter have increased the use of chicken or other poultry, fresh fruit, fish or other seafood and/or fresh vegetables.*
- *About one quarter have decreased consumption of eggs, red meat, chocolate and/or ice cream.*

While most food preparers say that there has been virtually no change in usage frequency for the specified types of food in the past year or two, there are some moderate increases or decreases that are significant. For each of several types of food, one household in four reports that the current level of consumption is higher than it was a year or two ago. Such is the case with chicken or other poultry (26% eat more often), fresh fruit (26%), fish or other seafood (24%) and fresh vegetables (24%). Foods that are consumed less frequently include eggs (29%), red meat (28%), chocolate (25%) and ice cream (23%).

Table 3

*"Is that **more often, less often,** or **about the same** as, say, a year or two ago?"*

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation and the following type of food is eaten in the household)

	Total Involved Households		
	About the Same	More Often	Less Often
Pasta	75%	13%	12%
Frozen vegetables	74	13	13
Cheese	70	16	14
Fresh fruit	70	26	4
Fresh vegetables	70	24	5
Chocolate	67	8	25
Chicken or other poultry	66	26	7
Fish or other seafood	66	24	9
Ice cream and other frozen desserts	65	12	23
Red meat: such as beef, pork, lamb	65	7	28
Eggs	64	8	29
(Base)		(737-757)	

Changes in Consumption Frequency

Among those eating fresh fruit, chicken and other poultry, fresh vegetables and fish or other seafood *more often:*

- *The growth in frequency of eating these foods is generally far greater among 25-44 year olds than their older counterparts.*
- *Consumption also is increasing for these foods among a higher percentage of those with children and working women than among those with opposite demographics.*

Among those eating eggs, red meat, chocolate and ice cream and other frozen desserts *less often:*

- *Those who are eating specified foods less often are about as likely to come equally from the 25-44 and 45 and older age groups as well as working and nonworking women categories.*
- *Households without children, compared to those with children, are more likely to eat these foods less often.*

Looking at only the totals it might be construed that a quarter of the sample across the board is eating certain foods either more or less often. But it would be misleading to think that this percentage holds firm across demographic categories, especially among those eating specific foods more often. Compare age groups, households with and without children and working versus nonworking women to discover some truly dramatic differences in increased consumption of fresh fruit, chicken or other poultry, fresh vegetables and fish or other seafood.

For example, while only 15% of the 45 and older group are eating fresh fruit more often, that's true of 36% of the 25-44 group, making the 25-44 year olds 140% more likely to be increasing fresh fruit usage than their older counterparts.

This illustrates the actual differences between the figures.

	Eat More Often		
	25-44	45 and Over	Age 25-44 Percent Above
Fresh fruit	36%	15%	+ 140%
Chicken and other poultry	28	23	+ 22
Fresh vegetables	33	14	+ 136
Fish or other seafood	31	19	+ 63

While not as striking as among the age groups, those with children and working females are significantly more likely to be eating the above named foods more often than groups with opposite demographics. For example, while 32% of those with children say fresh fruit is eaten more often, that's true of only 22% without children; 30% of working females also admit to greater fresh fruit usage; yet only 15% of nonworking females say that's the case.

But turn to the four foods which the highest percentage choose to eat less often (eggs, red meat, chocolate and ice cream and other frozen desserts) and there's less difference between the demographic groups. Approximately the same percentage of those in both age groups and among workers and nonworkers say they eat these foods less often, with the exception of eggs.

Thirty-one percent of working females eat eggs less often, while that's true of 25% of nonworking women. However, there is some difference among households with and without children. In all cases, a higher percentage without children eat the aforementioned items less often than do those with children.

Table 4

Selected "more often" and "less often" mentions from Table 3.

Involved Households — Eaten More Often

	Total	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
Fresh fruit	26%	36%	15%	32%	22%	30%	15%	29%
Chicken or other poultry	26	28	23	30	25	28	22	26
Fresh vegetables	24	33	14	30	21	29	14	28
Fish or other seafood	24	31	19	30	21	25	20	25
(Base)	(737-757)	(366-375)	(316-325)	(418-432)	(319-325)	(281-295)	(201-206)	(375-384)

Table 5

Involved Households — Eaten Less Often

	Total	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
Eggs	29%	28%	29%	24%	31%	31%	25%	28%
Red Meat: such as beef, pork, lamb	28	30	26	24	29	27	27	27
Chocolate	25	26	23	23	26	25	25	22
Ice cream and other frozen desserts	23	22	22	18	25	25	21	19
(Base)	(754-757)	(374-375)	(324-325)	(431-432)	(323-325)	(293-295)	(205-206)	(383-384)

Reasons for Changing Consumption

- *The most change from a list of specified foods is found in the consumption of red meat, chicken or poultry and fish or other seafood.*
- *Health concerns rank high among respondents making changes in protein sources, but taste is important too.*

Food preparers report that their household's sources of protein have changed the most in the past year or two. One food preparer in four reports that the household's consumption of red meat has changed the most over the past year or two (26%). An additional one food preparer in ten says that the amount of chicken or fish eaten has recently changed the most (15% and 11% respectively). Fourteen percent report that none of the foods listed represents the most change in their household consumption.

While reasons of health are expressed by a high percentage of those changing protein sources, a significant percentage say the food pleases the palate. By far, the highest percentage say the change in consumption of red meat is due to the cholesterol or high fat content of red meat (42%). (See Table 7.) A much smaller percentage (16% for each) say the switch is a result of negative media coverage and/or simply eating more chicken and fish.

About one involved food preparer in ten says that the household's consumption of red meat has changed for dietary reasons (13%), for other health reasons (12%), as well as its high cost (11%). On a positive rather than a critical note, one involved food preparer in ten refers to a preference in his or her household for the taste of red meat (9%).

Food preparers who say their household's consumption of chicken has changed the most give as their primary reasons enjoyment of chicken (29%) and the fact that chicken has less fat (26%). (See Table 8.) Two in ten also refer to the fact that chicken is lower in price (23%), it is better than red meat or a healthier type of food (21% each), and that it is easy to prepare (20%). Roughly one involved food preparer in six, or fewer, has specific health reasons in mind as the reason for a change in eating chicken (16%), a concern about salmonella or other poison in chickens (10%), or the fact that it has fewer calories (8%).

While several reasons underlie changes in consumption of fish, respondents quite often attribute the change in their households to their belief that fish is a healthier, more nutritious type of food (42%) or to the enjoyment of eating it (41%). (See Table 9). Also mentioned in this context but to a lesser extent (by two involved food preparers in ten) is the fact that the change is a result of fish having less cholesterol/fat (21%) and/or being more available (18%). About one in six gives reasons of general health concerns (16%) or ease of preparation (14%) as the impetus for the change in their household's consumption of fish.

Table 6

*"Thinking about these various types of food, for which **one** has your household's consumption changed the most in the past year or two?"*

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation)

	Involved Households
	Total
Red meat: beef, pork, lamb	26%
Chicken or poultry	15
Fish or seafood	11
Fresh vegetables	7
Eggs	5
Chocolate	4
Pasta	4
Fresh fruit	3
Ice cream and other frozen desserts	3
Frozen vegetables	2
Cheese	2
None	14
Don't know/no response	4
(Base)	(757)

Table 7

"Why has your household's consumption of red meat: beef, pork, lamb changed?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation and who said their household's consumption of red meat: beef, pork, lamb has changed the most)

	Involved Households
	Total
Cholesterol/fat is too high	42%
Media/negative awareness of/perception of unhealthy	16
Eat more chicken and fish	16
Diet	13
Other health reasons	12
Cost is too high	11
Like the taste/prefer red meat	9
Heart problems	6
(Base)	(203)

(Multiple Responses Accepted)
(Main Mentions)

Table 8

"Why has your household's consumption of chicken or poultry changed?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation and who said their household's consumption of chicken and poultry has changed the most)

	Involved Households
	Total
Like/enjoy chicken	29%
Less fat	26
Cheaper/less expensive	23
Better than beef or red meat/ eat less red meat	21
Healthier/more nutritional type of food	21
Easier/more ways to prepare	20
Specific health reasons	16
Fear of salmonella/poison in chickens	10
Lower in calories	8
(Base)	(116)

(Multiple Responses Accepted)
(Main Mentions)

Table 9

"Why has your household's consumption of fish and other seafood changed?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation and who said their household's consumption of fish and other seafood has changed the most)

	Involved Households
	Total
Healthier/more nutritional type of food	42%
Like/enjoy fish or seafood	41
Less cholesterol/fat	21
More available	18
For health reasons	16
Easier/more ways to prepare	14
(Base)	(82)

(Multiple Responses Accepted)
(Main Mentions)

Methodology

The data for this survey were collected from 862 telephone interviews conducted in September and October 1987 by Opinion Research Corporation. Households contacted for the survey were selected by using ORC's Random Digit Dialing (RDD) system to create a random sample of U.S. telephone households that closely approximates the total U.S. population. However, a statistical weighting procedure also was employed when the data were tabulated to bring the survey results into balance with actual universe proportions. The RDD system excludes commercial numbers and includes unlisted and new telephone numbers as well as listed numbers.

Each household was screened by the following two criteria:

1) male or female head of household
2) degree of involvement in cooking all or part of an evening meal

Heads of household who cooked all of an evening meal at least once a month, as well as those preparing part of that meal at least once a week, were considered to be "involved" food preparers living in "involved" households. Those preparing all or part of an evening meal less often than that were considered to be "uninvolved" food preparers living in "uninvolved" households. Since the vast majority were "involved" households and because "involved" respondents offer the most valuable information on food use and shopping patterns, the information in this summary has been limited only to these households.

Demographic Profile of Involved Food Preparers: 1987

	Number in Sample	Percentage
Total Involved Food Preparers	757	100%
Sex		
Men	253	37
Women	504	63
Working	295	54
Nonworking	206	44

	Total	Males	Females
Marital Status			
Married	61%	60%	61%
Single, widowed, divorced, separated	40	40	38
Spouse Works	72%	64%	76%
Age			
Under 25	6%	8%	5%
25-34	23	29	20
35-44	21	22	20
45-54	15	12	17
55-64	15	14	16
65-74	13	12	13
75 and over	7	3	9
Average Age	47 years	43 years	48 years
Education			
High school or less	47%	40%	52%
Some college/college grad.	42	47	39
Post graduate	10	13	8
Household Size			
One	24%	23%	25%
Two	33	35	32
Three	18	18	18
Four or more	25	24	25
Average Household Size	2.6	2.6	2.6
Type of Household			
With children	32%	32%	33%
Without children	66	68	66
Home Ownership			
Own home	67%	61%	71%
Rent home	33	39	29

	Total	Males	Females
Income			
Less than $20,000	32%	27%	35%
$20,000 - $39,000	33	36	32
$40,000 - $74,000	19	22	18
$75,000 or more	5	8	3
Average Income	$30,900	$35,300	$28,200
Race			
White	88%	86%	89%
Black	10	11	9
Oriental/Asian/ Pacific Indian	*	*	*
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1	1	1
Other	2	2	1
Region			
Northeast	23%	23%	23%
North Central	25	26	25
South	34	33	34
West	17	18	17

Northeast includes Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia.

North Central includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

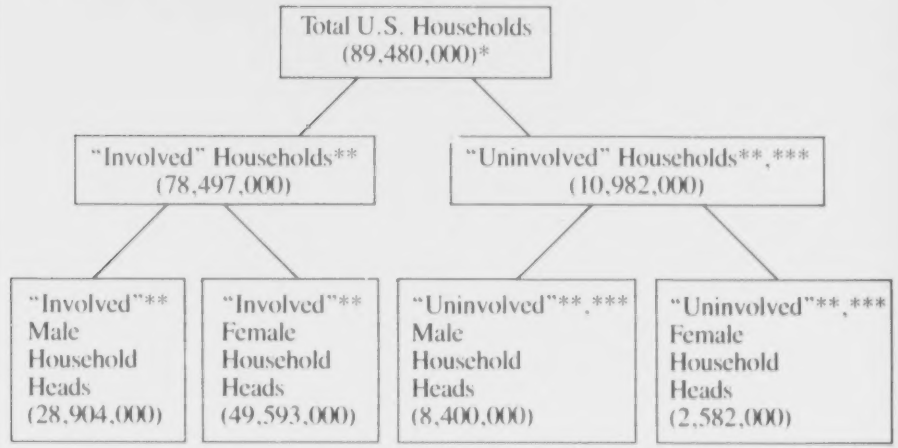
South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

West includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

*Less than ½%.

Projectability

Because it was important that the research data be projectable to the U.S. population, the following chart illustrates the size of the universe of U.S. households* and its composition in terms of the household subgroups that were surveyed**:


Total U.S. Households (89,480,000)*
"Involved" Households** (78,497,000)
"Uninvolved" Households**,*** (10,982,000)
"Involved"** Male Household Heads (28,904,000)
"Involved"** Female Household Heads (49,593,000)
"Uninvolved"**,*** Male Household Heads (8,400,000)
"Uninvolved"**,*** Female Household Heads (2,582,000)

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 411, **Households and Family Characteristics: March 1987,** U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1987 (Issued September 1987).

**For each of these subgroups the estimates are based on the level of incidence obtained during the interviewing process.

***It is important to note that these sub-universe estimates may overstate the true number of households in which *both* household heads are "uninvolved" food preparers. This is due to the fact that the operational definition of an "uninvolved" household used in this study is based on information about the interviewed head of household and does not directly take into account information about the other household head's level of involvement in food preparation.

Sampling Variation

With any study the results are subject to sampling variation i.e., the difference between survey results and those that would be gathered by studying the entire population. In general, sampling variation is less when the size of the sample is large and the sample result approaches 0% or 100%, rather than being in a middle range. The following table shows the approximate range of sampling variation for involved males and females, two major groups described in this study. For example, in Table 1, 71% of those 25-44 are concerned over whether foods in stores are fresh. This percentage is based on the sample of about 370 respondents 25-44. The table below shows that the sample variation for a 70% response at that base is plus or minus 5%.

Sampling Tolerances (+/−) at 95% Confidence Level for Involved Males and Females

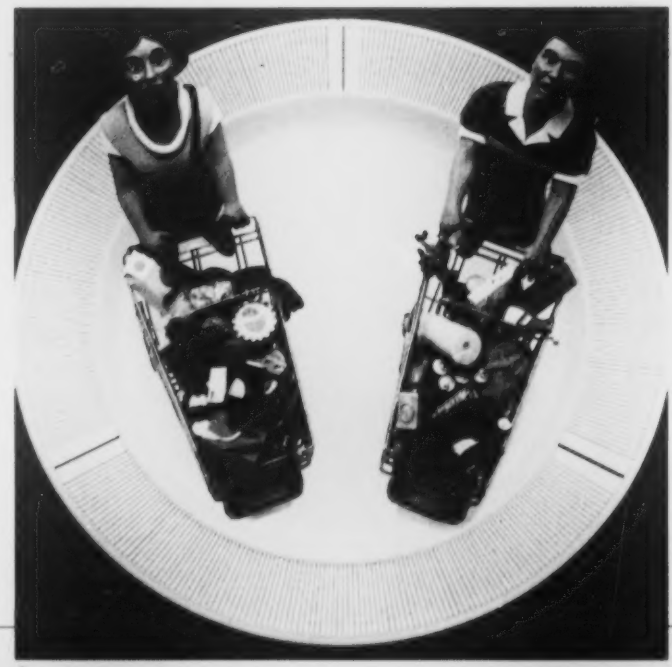
Sample Size	Type of Group	Approximate Sampling Tolerances 10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
370	Respondents 25-44	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%
320	Respondents 45 and over	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%

Applying the sampling variation to the 71% response, the true proportion of 25-44 year olds with concern over freshness should be no less than 66% nor more than 76%.

In addition to the sampling variation that can be figured for a single piece of data, it's also helpful to determine whether the differences *between* certain percentages are real or the result of sampling variation. Looking at Table 1 again, while 71% of 25-44 year olds have a concern over freshness, the same is true of 66% of 45 and over respondents. The 25-44 year old data is based on 375 responses and the 45 and over on 325 responses. The sampling tolerance is 6% and since there's a 5% differential between the two percentages, this finding is not statistically significant.

Sampling Tolerances (at 95% Confidence Level) To Use in Evaluating Differences Between Two Percentage Results

Sample Comparison	Approximate Sampling Tolerances 10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Various Key Subgroup Comparisons					
757 vs. 375	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
325	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
375 vs. 325	4%	5%	6%	6%	7%
432 vs. 295	4%	6%	7%	7%	7%
384 vs. 295	5%	6%	7%	7%	8%
206	5%	7%	8%	8%	8%



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A Study of Information Sources, Planning and Purchasing

1988

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and Better Homes and Gardens Magazine
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Table of Contents

Page

Introduction 1

Special Notes 2

Survey Highlights 2

Detailed Findings

- Supermarket Services 3
- Information Sources 5
- Planning Ahead 7
- Time/Effort Planning 9
- Concerns About Packaging 10
- Suggested Food Industry Changes 12

Methodology 13

- Demographic Profile of Respondents 14
- Projectability 15
- Sampling Variation 16

Introduction

Pinpointing trends in food preparation or usage and supermarket shopping habits is critical for the Food Marketing Institute and Better Homes and Gardens® magazine in staying on target with the needs of America's consumers. With a goal of tracking these trends over five years, in 1987 the Food Marketing Institute and Better Homes and Gardens commissioned a study covering these areas:

- Food patterns and meal consumption.
- Time, convenience and entertaining.
- Nutrition.
- Information sources, planning and purchasing.

This summary on information sources, planning and purchasing contains the results of the survey among "involved" food preparers and households. Only "involved" food preparers and households are documented, because they represent the vast majority of reporting households (757 from a total of 862) and because the most interesting information come from these.

The definition of involvement follows:

- **Involved Food Preparers:** Those male and female heads of household who reported preparing an evening meal in the household at least once a month or preparing part of an evening meal — a main dish, side dish, or dessert — at least once a week.
- **Involved Households:** Those households in which the interviewed head of household reported preparing an evening meal in the household at least once a month or part of an evening meal — a main dish, side dish, or dessert — at least once a week.

Additional summaries from this study covering 1) food patterns and meal consumption, 2) nutrition and 3) time, convenience and entertaining are available. Supermarket personnel may obtain these from the Food Marketing Institute and manufacturers from Better Homes and Gardens magazine.

Special Notes

All charts are based on the 757 "involved" food preparers/households or a subsample noted after the specific question. "Involved" food preparers and "involved" households are used interchangeably. The percentages shown in each table are calculated on the base number noted. These percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple response.

In the text, when percentages are noted for a respondent, it is assumed that the survey participant is speaking for his or her household only. Percentages with the percent sign running down are to be read across; those with the percent sign running across are to be read down.

For more specific information on the study and sampling tolerances, the methodology is found at the end of this summary.

While care has been taken to summarize study results completely, specific charts and applicable demographic groups have been selected to show the important points in the study.

Highlights on Information Sources, Planning and Purchasing

Supermarket services are not seen as planning tools by most respondents.

Only one in five (20%) survey participants agree that they use special supermarket services to a great/some extent in planning the household's meals.

Printed material is the top choice when seeking cooking and meal preparation ideas.

Seventy-five percent of respondents say cookbooks, 63% pinpoint health/nutrition books and 56% target family/women's magazines as very/fairly useful information sources.

The use of information sources differs by demographic group.

Women are more apt to use nearly all information sources than men. Those 25-44 are more likely to find cookbooks (80%), plus information from relatives (59%) and/or friends (53%) very/fairly useful than are their older counterparts. A significantly higher percentage of respondents with children turn to two of the top three information sources than do those in childless households.

The majority plan at least a few days ahead for food purchases; women/households with children are the likeliest to plan ahead.

Fifty-seven percent of respondents plan purchases a week or more in advance. Possibly because women shoulder a great deal of the cooking load, they (61%) are more likely than men (51%) to plan purchases a week or more ahead. Working women (60%) and nonworking women (62%) are equally likely to plan a week or more ahead. In fact 19% of

working women versus 13% of nonworking women plan more than a week in advance.

Health concerns motivate respondents to search labels/packages on new products.

Of the eleven highest concerns noted by survey participants, seven involve health issues. Twenty-three percent of respondents look for sodium/salt content, 19% nutritional content and 17% check calories.

Nearly three of 10 request packaging changes from the food industry.

Twenty-seven percent say they'd like to see a change in packaging and 18% would like relief from "high" food prices and/or have a concern about additives/preservatives.

Supermarket Services

- *One in five use special supermarket services such as menu suggestions and recipes to a great or to some extent.*
- *About eight of 10 do not use these services with any frequency for planning.*
- *Those older (versus younger respondents) are the most likely to use these services.*

Special services provided by the supermarket influence to any significant degree one in five (20%) survey participants in the planning of the household's meals. However, eight of 10 (79%) say their planning is influenced to little or no extent by supermarketers' efforts in this area. The explanation for this high figure may in part be due to several factors. Among them are the fact that 1) these services may still not be available in many supermarkets, 2) they're not available on a regular basis and/or 3) that respondents don't view these as *planning* tools.

Though there are no large differences in the opinions of the various demographic groups, two groups deserve special notice. Those older (45 or more) find supermarket services somewhat more helpful. Twenty-two percent of the 45 and overs utilize these items to a great degree or some extent, while only 16% of the 25-44 year olds agree. Nonworking females are generally more likely (24%) than working females (19%) or those in two-income households (17%) to plan with these special extras that supermarkets provide.

Table 1

"To what extent do special services provided by the supermarket such as menu suggestions, recipes and food tastings, influence how you plan the household's meals? To a great extent, to some extent, or to little or no extent at all?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation and who plan ahead what food will be bought for the household)

Involved Households

	Total	Males	Females	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
To a great extent	3%	2%	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%	4%	2%
	20%	17%	21%	16%	22%	18%	21%	19%	24%	17%
To some extent	17	15	18	14	18	15	18	17	20	15
To little / no extent at all	79	81	77	83	74	82	77	81	75	82
Don't know / no opinion	2	2	2	1	4	*	3	*	1	2
(Base)	(733)	(235)	(498)	(368)	(311)	(320)	(413)	(293)	(202)	(373)

Information Sources

- *Cookbooks, health and nutrition books and family/women's magazines are the most useful sources for cooking and meal preparation ideas.*
- *Women are more likely than men to consider a variety of information sources very/fairly useful.*
- *Younger respondents are more likely than those older to depend on cookbooks, relatives and/or friends for information.*
- *Those with children find cookbooks and family/women's magazines more useful sources of information than those without youngsters.*
- *Working women are more likely to depend on cookbooks and/or to tap relatives for planning ideas than their nonworking counterparts.*

The top three sources of information about cooking and meal preparation are 1) cookbooks (75% use), 2) health books (63% use), 3) magazines (56% use)*. Nearly across the board men are less likely to find the information sources listed very/fairly useful than women, but even so seven of 10 (68%) use cookbooks, six of 10 (59%) health books and more than four of 10 (43% and 44% respectively) pull ideas from magazines and/or newspapers. Part of the reason women outpace men in use of information sources may be that women cook with greater frequency and may need more fresh ideas than men or that they're in the habit of using these information sources.**

Sex is a determinant in selecting information sources, but age and lifestage are important too. Consider the differences between the 25-44 year olds and those 45 and over. Those 25-44 are more likely to agree that they find the following very/fairly useful than are those 45 and over: cookbooks (80% for 25-44 years versus 72% for the 45 plus group), relatives (59% versus 42%) and/or friends (53% versus 43%). A higher percentage of those 45 and over find newspapers and supermarkets very/fairly useful than do those 25-44. (Sixty-three percent of the 45 plus group select newspapers versus 49% of those 25-44; 48% of the 45 and over group pick supermarkets versus 36% of the 25-44 year olds.)

Children create a climate for cooking***, so it's not surprising that a higher percentage of those in households with children find two of the top three information sources very/fairly useful than do those in households without children. Cookbooks are picked by 82% of those with children versus 71% of those without youngsters and magazines by 64% versus 52%. On the other hand, 46% of those in childless households find supermarkets very/fairly useful information sources, but only 36% of those with children agree.

An interesting story develops from the figures revealing information sources for working/nonworking women and two-income households. (The following refer to those who consider the noted sources very/fairly useful for information.)

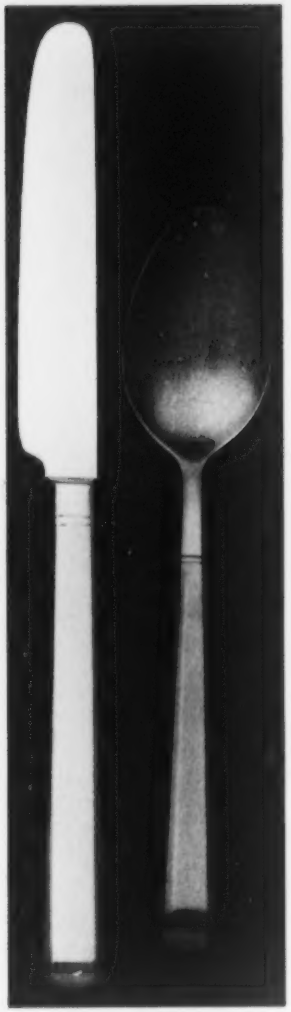
- **Cookbooks.** A higher percentage of working females (82%) and those in two-income households (84%) turn to cookbooks than do nonworking females.
- **Magazines.** A larger percentage in all three groups turn to magazines more frequently than does the average (56%) survey participant: working females (62%), nonworking females (67%), two-income households (68%).
- **Relatives.** Relying on relatives for cooking advice is more apparent among working women (56%) and those in two-income households (56%) than among nonworking women (47%).

*For ease in the information sources noted "cookbooks and other food-related books" will be referred to as "cookbooks," "books on health or nutrition" as "health" books, "family magazines or women's magazines" as "magazines" and "food columns in newspapers" as "newspapers."

**The question of time spent on food preparation is covered in the study segment on time, convenience and entertaining.

***The question of children and cooking is covered in the study segment on food patterns and meal consumption.

Table 2



"I'm going to mention some different sources of information about cooking and meal preparation. For each one, would you please tell me whether it is very useful, fairly useful, not particularly useful, or not at all useful to you in providing worthwhile information on cooking and meal preparation."

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation)

	Very/Fairly Useful Involved Households									
	Total	Males	Females	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
Cookbooks or other food-related books	75%	68%	79%	80%	72%	82%	71%	82%	74%	84%
Books on health or nutrition	63	59	64	61	65	64	62	63	66	64
Family magazines or women's magazines	56	43	64	58	57	64	52	62	67	68
Food columns in newspapers	55	44	62	49	63	53	56	58	64	58
Relatives	52	51	52	59	42	56	50	56	47	56
Friends or neighbors	48	44	51	53	43	48	48	52	51	49
Television programs	44	44	44	43	46	46	43	42	45	45
Supermarkets	42	37	45	36	48	36	46	43	46	36
Cooking classes or courses	16	13	18	15	16	17	15	19	16	15
(Base)	(757)	(253)	(504)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)	(384)

Planning Ahead

- *Planning a week or more ahead for food purchases is the norm for nearly six of 10 (57%) respondents.*
- *Women and households with children are the most likely to plan ahead for food purchases.*
- *There is little difference between the percentage of working (60%) and nonworking (62%) women planning a week or more ahead.*

The chart on planning ahead for food purchases reveals that there's a wide variance among survey participants in planning for food purchases. The figures indicate that while there's a segment of the population that's motivated by day-to-day impulse, there are much larger segments planning a week or more ahead.

Seventeen percent of the respondents say they plan food purchases day by day. Those 25-44 are more apt to be planning this way (20%) than are older respondents (13%). The same relationship is true of working women (19%) versus nonworking women (12%).

Yet, the real story seems not among the frequent planners so much as among those who plan for the long term. For example, it's surprising that in this fast-paced world nearly six of 10 (57%) plan purchases a week or more in advance. It's also revealing to see how this function is handled for specific demographic groups. Women (61%) are much more likely than men (51%) to plan purchases a week or more ahead. Similarly, when respondents have children their shopping list often is compiled further in advance. Sixty-four percent with youngsters plan food buying a week or more ahead, while only 54% of those without children do so.

It's interesting, too, that no matter whether the female is working or not, planning ahead for purchasing remains high. About six of ten working women (60%), nonworking women (62%) and two-income households (62%) plan a week or more ahead. One especially interesting note, too, is that working women are more likely to plan way ahead than are their nonworking sisters. Nearly one in five (19%) female workers plan food purchasing more than one week in advance; the same is true of only 13% of nonworkers. On the surface these statistics may seem puzzling. After all, wouldn't it seem more likely that working women, for example, would be planning purchases day by day in their busy environment? Yet the statistics may be showing that busy people, such as those with children and working women, find that planning food purchases far in advance means both time savings and flexibility. (For example, on an unexpectedly busy night, it's easier to whip up a quick meal from a stocked larder than it is to make an extra stop at the supermarket.)

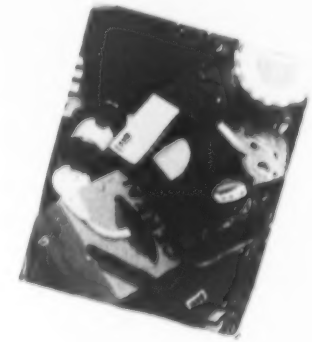


Table 3

*"How far ahead would you say you plan what **foods will be bought** for the household: Do you plan day by day; for the next few days; a week ahead; or more than a week ahead?"*

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal planning)

	Involved Households									
	Total	Males	Females	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
Day by day	17%	19%	16%	20%	13%	15%	18%	19%	12%	14%
Next few days	20	21	20	20	20	19	21	19	21	20
Week ahead	43 } 57%	39 } 51%	45 } 61%	41 } 57%	46 } 58%	46 } 64%	42 } 54%	41 } 60%	49 } 62%	48 } 62%
More than a week	14	12	16	16	12	18	12	19	13	14
Don't plan the household's meals	4	7	1	2	5	2	5	1	2	4
Other	2	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	1
(Base)	(757)	(253)	(504)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)	(384)

Time/Effort Planning

- *About half of respondents say they spend at least a fair amount of time and effort planning meals.**
- *Women are far more likely to spend time planning than are men.*
- *Women, households with children and nonworking women are the most likely to spend a significant amount of time planning.*

Planning takes a good deal of time and effort for nearly half (45%) of survey participants. Seven percent say "a lot" and 38% agree that "a fair amount" of time is spent. Only about one in five (22%) admits to spending almost no time planning.

A significant portion of those spending almost no time planning are males. In fact, nearly three-quarters (72%) of males spend just a little or almost no time planning compared to only 45% of women. Conversely, 28% of men versus 54% of women agree they take a fair amount of time or more in the planning process, possibly indicating that women are still cooking the more complex meals.

Youngsters in the household create a climate for planning also. Fifty-six percent of those with children employ a fair amount of time or more in the planning process; that's true of only 40% of those without children.

Because their nonworking status may afford them more planning minutes, it's not surprising that nonworking women say they spend the most time planning. Two thirds (66%) put in a lot or fair amount of time versus 43% for working females.

*In future references, "time and effort" will be referred to as "time."

Table 4

*"In a typical week, would you say you spend a lot of **time** and **effort** in **planning the household's meals**, you spend a fair amount of time and effort, just a little, or almost none?"*

(Base: Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation)

	Involved Households							
	Total	Males	Females	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females	Two-Income Households
A lot of time and effort	7%	4%	8%	9%	6%	7%	10%	7%
Fair amount	38	24	46	47	34	36	56	44
	45%	28%	54%	56%	40%	43%	66%	51%
Just a little	33	39	30	27	36	37	22	34
Almost none	22	33	15	17	24	19	11	15
Don't know/ no opinion	1	*	1	*	1	0	1	*
(Base)	(757)	(253)	(504)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)	(384)

*Less than ½%

Concerns about Packaging

- *Health issues dominate when respondents consult the label/package of a new product.*
- *Demographics affect what information is sought on packages (e.g., those 45 and over have a strong interest in sodium/salt content).*
- *Women are much more likely than men to be interested in salt/sodium.*

Health concerns are by far more interesting to survey participants when checking a new product's label or package than other issues. Of eleven concerns noted by the highest percentage responding to this question, seven involve health-related issues. The highest percentage (31%) say they are most likely to check the label to determine the ingredients. Here are how the other health topics rank:

Rank of Top Health Concerns on a Package/Label	Specific Interest
#2	Sodium/salt content (23%)
#4	Nutritional content (19%)
#5	Calorie count (17%)
#6	Sugar (17%)
#7	Chemicals/additives (16%)
#8	Fat content (13%)
#9	Low cholesterol (10%)

Other items that concern survey participants include price (22%), preparation instructions (12%) and attractiveness (11%).

It's interesting to note that the percentages are fairly even across the spectrum of demographics. However, there are instances of variation. Not surprisingly, those in the older age groups (45 or more) show a greater concern over the salt/sodium content (28%) and cholesterol (13%) than do those in the 25-44 age range (20% and 6% respectively). It was revealed in another segment of this study that nutrition interest was higher in households with children.* Similarly, those with youngsters tend to read labels for nutrition information (22%) than are those without youngsters (17%). Chemicals/additives in food also are of more interest to these family-oriented households (22%) than to those without children (13%).

One puzzling dichotomy is the difference between men's and women's reactions to certain nutrition issues. Because of weight control, one might expect women to be more concerned for example about calories (19% of women read labels to find this information versus 14% for men), but it's puzzling to see that 27% of women consult labels for salt content versus only 18% for men. In effect this says that women are 50% more likely to consult the label than men.

*The question of children and nutrition is covered in the study segment on nutrition.

Table 5

"When you see a new food product you are interested in buying, what, if anything, do you look for on its label or package?"

(Base = Those who are involved with cooking and meal preparation)

Involved Households

	Total	Males	Females	25-44	45 or More	Children in Household	No Children in Household	Working Females	Nonworking Females
Ingredients / contents / natural ingredients (general mentions)	31%	30%	31%	31%	31%	29%	32%	31%	32%
Sodium / salt content	23	18	27	20	28	21	25	25	30
Price	22	22	21	24	19	25	20	23	21
Nutritional content / focus on nutritional references	19	21	17	21	16	22	17	19	15
Sugar	17	11	21	18	16	19	16	23	19
Calorie count	17	14	19	19	16	16	18	20	19
Chemicals and additives in the food / whether it has preservatives	16	16	16	20	14	22	13	19	15
Fat content	13	10	15	12	14	11	14	14	15
Ease of preparation / instructions on how to make it / method of cooking it	12	12	12	14	10	15	10	15	8
If it's appealing to me, I buy it / attractiveness / design of the product	11	13	11	10	12	9	13	11	11
Not too much cholesterol / low cholesterol	10	10	9	6	13	7	11	9	10
(Base)	(757)	(253)	(504)	(375)	(325)	(325)	(432)	(295)	(206)

(Multiple Responses Accepted)

(Main Mentions)

Suggested Food Industry Changes

- *Survey participants would most like to see the food industry make changes in packaging.*
- *The concerns tying for second and third are a desire for change in additives/preservatives and relief from high prices.*
- *In most cases, the 25-44 year old group wants more changes than those 45 and over.*

Packaging issues are of concern to the highest percentage of respondents (27%) when asked to pinpoint one area where they'd like to see a change in the food industry. Other items singled out for change include additives/preservatives (18%), food prices (18%), selection of food (8%) and freshness (6%). One in 10 see no need for change or improvements.

Those 25-44 are more interested in changes than those 45 and over, except in the area of prices (15% of 25-44 year olds think prices are too high versus 19% of those 45 or more). For example, while 31% of the 25-44 year olds have a concern over packaging issues that's true of only 24% of those 45 and over. In fact, while 15% of those 45 and over see no need for changes/improvements, that's true of only 5% of the 25-44 year olds.

Table 6

"Thinking very broadly, what one thing would you like to see changed in the food industry — it could have to do with foods themselves, packaging of foods, or the stores and supermarkets where food is sold."

	Involved Households		
	Total	25-44	45 or More
Packaging issues (NET)	27%	31%	24%
List all ingredients/calories	9	11	7
Smaller portions for single people	5	3	7
Concerns about additives/preservatives (NET)	18	20	16
More natural food without chemicals/preservatives	10	15	5
Salt	5	3	8
Prices too high	18	15	19
Increase in selection of food (NET)	8	9	8
Fresh (increase selection of fresh foods)	5	4	5
Concerns regarding freshness (NET)	6	7	5
Fresher produce/products	5	6	4
No improvements/changes needed	10	5	15
(Base) *(Main Mentions)*	(757)	(375)	(325)

Methodology

The data for this survey were collected from 862 telephone interviews conducted in September and October 1987 by Opinion Research Corporation. Households contacted for the survey were selected by using ORC's Random Digit Dialing (RDD) system to create a random sample of U.S. telephone households that closely approximates the total U.S. population. However, a statistical weighting procedure also was employed when the data were tabulated to bring the survey results into balance with actual universe proportions. The RDD system excludes commercial numbers and includes unlisted and new telephone numbers as well as listed numbers.

Each household was screened by the following two criteria:

1) male or female head of household
2) degree of involvement in cooking all or part of an evening meal

Heads of household who cooked all of an evening meal at least once a month, as well as those preparing part of that meal at least once a week, were considered to be "involved" food preparers living in "involved" households. Those preparing all or part of an evening meal less often than that were considered to be "uninvolved" food preparers living in "uninvolved" households. Since the vast majority were "involved" households and because "involved" respondents offer the most valuable information on food use and shopping patterns, the information in this summary has been limited only to these households.

Demographic Profile of Involved Food Preparers: 1987

	Number in Sample	Percentage
Total Involved Food Preparers	757	100%
Sex		
Men	253	37
Women	504	63
Working	295	54
Nonworking	206	44

	Total	Males	Females
Marital Status			
Married	61%	60%	61%
Single, widowed, divorced, separated	40	40	38
Spouse Works	72%	64%	76%
Age			
Under 25	6%	8%	5%
25-34	23	29	20
35-44	21	22	20
45-54	15	12	17
55-64	15	14	16
65-74	13	12	13
75 and over	7	3	9
Average Age	47 years	43 years	48 years
Education			
High school or less	47%	40%	52%
Some college/college grad.	42	47	39
Post graduate	10	13	8
Household Size			
One	24%	23%	25%
Two	33	35	32
Three	18	18	18
Four or more	25	24	25
Average Household Size	2.6	2.6	2.6
Type of Household			
With children	32%	32%	33%
Without children	66	68	66
Home Ownership			
Own home	67%	61%	71%
Rent home	33	39	29

	Total	Males	Females
Income			
Less than $20,000	32%	27%	35%
$20,000 - $39,000	33	36	32
$40,000 - $74,000	19	22	18
$75,000 or more	5	8	3
Average Income	$30,900	$35,300	$28,200
Race			
White	88%	86%	89%
Black	10	11	9
Oriental/Asian/ Pacific Indian	*	*	*
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1	1	1
Other	2	2	1
Region			
Northeast	23%	23%	23%
North Central	25	26	25
South	34	33	34
West	17	18	17

Northeast includes Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia.

North Central includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

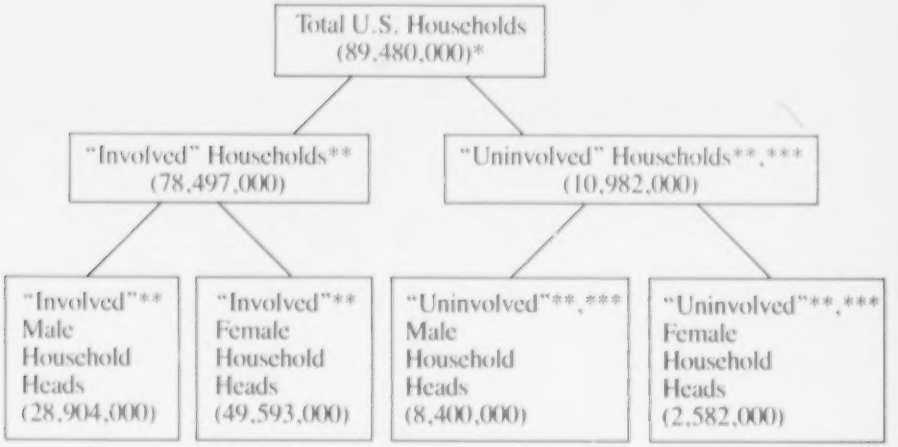
South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

West includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

*Less than ½%.

Projectability

Because it was important that the research data be projectable to the U.S. population, the following chart illustrates the size of the universe of U.S. households* and its composition in terms of the household subgroups that were surveyed**:


Total U.S. Households (89,480,000)*
"Involved" Households** (78,497,000)
"Uninvolved" Households**,*** (10,982,000)
"Involved"** Male Household Heads (28,904,000)
"Involved"** Female Household Heads (49,593,000)
"Uninvolved"**,*** Male Household Heads (8,400,000)
"Uninvolved"**,*** Female Household Heads (2,582,000)

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 411, **Households and Family Characteristics: March 1987,** U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1987 (Issued September 1987).

**For each of these subgroups the estimates are based on the level of incidence obtained during the interviewing process.

***It is important to note that these sub-universe estimates may overstate the true number of households in which *both* household heads are "uninvolved" food preparers. This is due to the fact that the operational definition of an "uninvolved" household used in this study is based on information about the interviewed head of household and does not directly take into account information about the other household head's level of involvement in food preparation.

Sampling Variation

With any study the results are subject to sampling variation, i.e., the difference between survey results and those that would be gathered by studying the entire population. In general, sampling variation is less when the size of the sample is large and the sample result approaches 0% or 100%, rather than being in a middle range. The following table shows the approximate range of sampling variation for involved males and females, two major groups described in this study. For example, in Table 1, 83% of 25-44 year olds say supermarket services influence planning to a little or no extent. This percentage is based on the sample of about 370 respondents 25-44. The table below shows that the sample variation for an 83% response at that base is plus or minus 4%.

Sampling Tolerances (+ / −) at 95% Confidence Level for Involved Males and Females

Sample Size	Type of Group	Approximate Sampling Tolerances 10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
370	Respondents 25-44	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%
310	Respondents 45 and over	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%

Applying the sampling variation to the 83% response, the true proportion of the 25-44 year olds should be no less than 79% nor more than 87%.

In addition to the sampling variation that can be figured for a single piece of data, it's also helpful to determine whether the differences *between* certain percentages are real or the result of sampling variation. Looking at Table 1 again, while 83% of 25-44 year olds do not use supermarket services, the same is true of 74% of 45 and over respondents. The 25-44 year old data is based on 368 responses and the 45 and over on 311 responses. The sampling tolerance is 6% and since there's a 9% differential between the two percentages, this finding is statistically significant.

Sampling Tolerances (at 95% Confidence Level) To Use in Evaluating Differences Between Two Percentage Results

Sample Comparison	Approximate Sampling Tolerances 10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Various Key Subgroup Comparisons					
757 vs. 370	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
310	4%	5%	6%	6%	7%
370 vs. 310	5%	6%	7%	7%	7%
432 vs. 295	4%	6%	7%	7%	7%
384 vs. 295	5%	6%	7%	7%	8%
206	5%	7%	8%	8%	8%